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MARC-VIVIEN FOE

Tributes to a gentle giant

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Gavin Hamilton
ART EDITOR
Gary Payne
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Peter Neish
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Duncan Bond
NEWS EDITOR
Jamie Rainbow
EDITORIAL SECRETARY
June Hiscock
PICTURES
Empics, Getty, Reuters, PA Photos

Thanks this issue to
Mike Hughes, David Rallis

EDITORIAL
King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street,
London SE1 9LS
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7261 5737
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7261 7474
E-mail: world_soccer@ipcmedia.com

ADVERTISING
Greg Dunbar, Simon Gerard,
Michael McConaghy
ADVERTORIALS AND SPONSORSHIP
Dan Yeadon
PRODUCTION MANAGER Tom Jennings

MANAGING DIRECTOR Evelyn Webster
PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Hamish Dawson
PUBLISHER Fiona Mercer

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Summer 2003

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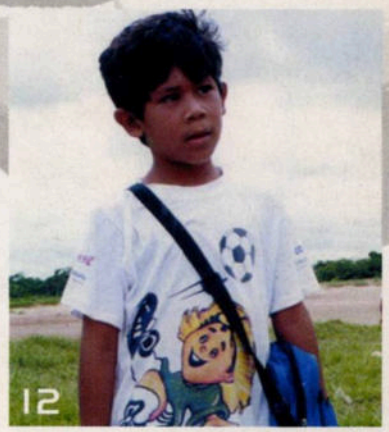

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THE INCREDIBLE EVENTS at Chelsea over the past month have demonstrated football's extraordinary capacity for the unexpected. Roman Abramovich's purchase of Chelsea could turn out to be the most significant development in the history of the game since the advent of pay-TV in the early 1990s. However, we will reserve judgment until next month, by which time the extent of the Russian's ambition will have become clearer.

Instead, the occasion of the World Under-17 Championship in Finland gives us the opportunity to examine an issue that goes to the very heart of the game: the complex world of youth football. I can think of no better person than Paul Gardner to lead our investigation. As well as being a *World Soccer* columnist and our USA correspondent, Paul is the journalist who can claim more than any other to be the world's leading authority on youth football. His 12-page report starts on page 12 and, though it does not seek to provide all the answers to such a diverse and complicated subject, will hopefully spark discussion on this crucial issue for the future of the game.

We also report and comment on the tragic death of Marc-Vivien Foe (overleaf). Last month, our printing deadlines meant that coverage of this desperately sad event was limited to the World Service section. But the implications for football of Foe's death cannot and must not be ignored.

Next month, we publish a special issue of *World Soccer*. Our European season preview edition will run to 140 pages and carry the one-off price of £3.50. Subscribers, as always with *World Soccer* Collector's Editions, will get their copy at no extra cost.

Gavin Hamilton, Editor (gavin_hamilton@ipcmedia.com)

*** *SAVE MONEY ON WORLD SOCCER* **SEE OUR SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION OFFER ON PAGE 28**

We'll never forget you...Cameroon skipper Rigobert Song (right) and Samuel Eto'o display a portrait of Foe at the Confederations Cup Final

Foe's final journey

Family, team-mates and politicians pay tribute to the tragic Cameroon midfielder

Honour guard...mourners follow Foe's coffin in Yaounde

MARC-VIVIEN FOE, who died at 28 after collapsing during Cameroon's Confederations Cup semi-final against Colombia in Lyon, was buried in Yaounde with full state honours.

Cameroon Prime Minister Peter Mafany Musonge led the mourners in the capital's Notre Dame cathedral, where Foe was posthumously awarded the Order of Valour, Cameroon's highest honour.

Two days earlier, at a memorial service in Lyon, Foe's widow Marie-Louise and her children Scott, Lesley and Angela heard tributes from FIFA president Sepp Blatter and Cameroon state President Paul Biya.

Manager Kevin Keegan led a delegation of mourners from Manchester City, Foe's last club, who announced that they would be retiring the player's No 23 shirt as a mark of respect.

Foe was buried in Okoui, on the outskirts of Yaounde, near a sports complex he was building to train youngsters.

Thousands of people lined the streets to witness Foe's final journey. A large banner in the cathedral featured a lion, the colours of the Cameroon flag – green, red and yellow – and the message: "*Un lion ne meurt jamais*" (a lion never dies).

The official government newspaper ran

with the headline "*Foe, l'hommage de la nation*" (Foe, the hommage of the nation) and 48 pages of coverage.

The midfielder's death sent shockwaves around the football world. He was the first footballer to die in an official tournament, and the first to die in a full international since Nigeria's Samuel Okwaraji collapsed on the pitch during a World Cup qualifier against Angola in 1989.

However, a post-mortem revealed nothing suspicious. "He died from natural causes," Lyon state prosecutor Xavier Richaud confirmed. Further blood and urine tests conducted by an International Olympic Committee-sanctioned Swiss laboratory revealed the complete absence of drugs, according to Richaud.

"He was suffering from a cardiomyopathy hypertrophia [abnormally

Respect...a Manchester City fan pays tribute

enlarged] left ventricle, something that is almost untraceable without carrying out an extensive examination."

Richaud suggested the heart problem was likely to have been caused by intense activity, and the malformed ventricle a result of "the overall effect of physical activity over time". He added: "There was a degeneration which triggered a major reaction in the heart."

Foe's death is likely to result in more intensive screening of players by their clubs. Already the transfers of Khalilou Fadiga (Auxerre to Internazionale) and Gabriel Milito (Independiente to Real Madrid) have been placed in doubt after medical tests revealed potential heart problems.

Keir Radnedge
COMMENT

A fitting memorial to Foe? Scrap the Confederations Cup

MARC-VIVIEN FOE "died from natural causes". Many people drew a huge sigh of relief at the autopsy conclusion. By contrast, I suspect it was the worst possible verdict.

The death of the Cameroon midfielder was a personal, family, national and football tragedy. Fear that the autopsy might prove sinisterly inconclusive nagged at officials within the Cameroon federation and FIFA. That was not the case. No drugs, no awful congenital heart defect that should have been caught by medical services at club and federation levels. Just "natural causes".

But "natural causes" that would not, presumably, have caught up with Foe had he not been involved in the competitive football whirlwind which spiralled out of control at the Confederations Cup.

It's hard to believe that "natural causes" would have caught up Foe simultaneously, instead, had he been walking down a street, relaxing with his family in their home near Lyon, or out jogging in the shady cool of the evening or early morning.

That is the extent of FIFA's failure to take a lead on the now tragically vexed issue of an overcrowded calendar.

I have spent many hours over the past decade listening to president Sepp Blatter's concerns for the health of the game: "There is too much football...we must fight to protect the exclusivity of our product ...footballers are playing too many matches...players must have more rest time built into the calendar...we must not let television and commercial concerns dictate to football..." etc, etc. Exactly right.

So how can FIFA not only permit but also organise, sell and promote a tournament that is competitively meaningless, that places extra unnecessary pressure on players and leaves fans suffering from satiation?

Remember this – the Confederations Cup demanded that top-class players, many of whom had virtually no holiday last year because of the World Cup, play three first-round games in five days – utterly contrary to all medical and even political strictures. The semi-finalists (who then went on to either Final or third-place play-off) were condemned to five games in 11 days.

Blatter thundered at the Spanish authorities for daring to run the final weeks of their League and Cup campaigns into a time zone set aside for internationals. Presumably, his grounds for complaint were that club demands prevented the likes of Ronaldo, Zinedine Zidane and Roberto Carlos gracing the Confederations Cup and so 'weakened' the teams on view. But by squashing matches together FIFA forced coaches into squad rotation. Just about every team could be considered deliberately weakened in any match to cope with the schedule's outrageous demands. I didn't hear Zidane, Ronaldo and Roberto Carlos complaining at playing one key match for Real Madrid while their international team-mates from France and Brazil were playing, respectively, five and three matches. Which players were the better protected? No contest.

As the France team doctor Jean-Marcel Ferret noted: "The only way top players can get proper rest nowadays is when they pick up a serious injury which puts them out of the game for a month."

The stadiums yawned at roughly half capacity. Even the Stade de France was 30,000 short of being filled for a Final that featured the hosts against Cameroon – with enormous immigrant support – in a most dramatic and high-profile context.

As one German reporter noted: "Nobody took any notice of the Confederations Cup until Foe died. Then suddenly it became bigger than the Wimbledon tennis."

A perceptive but awful epitaph for a tatty tournament.

> **'How can FIFA permit a tournament that is so meaningless and puts extra pressure on players?'**

The Confederations Cup will be resurrected in two years in one form or another as a dry run for the German World Cup organisers. As long as the fixtures are sensibly spaced, and no strictures are laid down about team strengths, then the event may have some logic. Personally, I do not see it. The German federation needs no practice at staging big matches or tournaments.

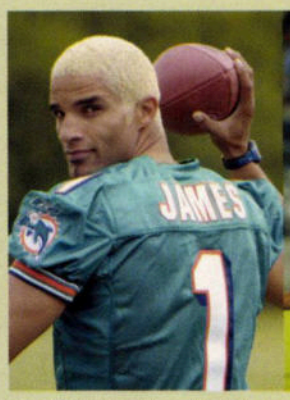
Just over a year ago, I asked Blatter: "Why, if you are worried about too much football, does FIFA insist on staging the pointless Confederations Cup?" He told me: "For one thing, we are contracted for 2003 and 2005..."

More's the pity for the family of Marc-Vivien Foe. Maybe he would have collapsed and died on the evening of June 26 all the same. But he would not have done so in the horrible worldwide focus of live television.

Over the past few weeks, various suggestions for a monument to poor Foe have been discussed. One was to put his name on the Confederations Cup trophy. For me the answer is simple and quite the reverse – the only worthy and appropriate tribute to Foe's memory, even sacrifice, would be to scrap the thing altogether, admit it was a terrible mistake and put the lesson into practice...instead of into mere hot air.

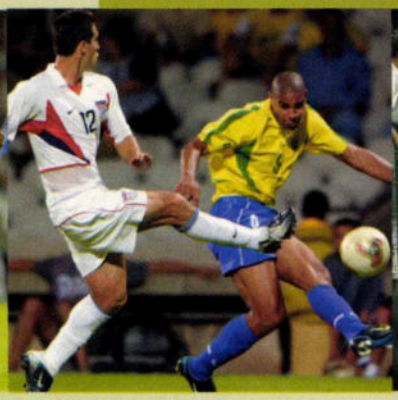
Commentary, page 30

The month in pictures



● 18/06/03...West Ham's David James spends the summer training with gridiron side Miami Dolphins

● 18/06/03...France begin their defence of the Confederations Cup with a 1-0 defeat of Colombia



● 21/06/03...Adriano scores for Brazil as the world champions beat the United States 1-0

● 23/06/03...Turkey's 2-2 draw with Brazil is marred by crowd violence in Saint-Etienne

Purple patch

Paddy Agnew on the return of Fiorentina

ON THURSDAY, May 15 this year, the name 'Fiorentina' was returned to its rightful home. That was the day when the No 1 football team in Florence completed the first symbolic stage in their splendid revival.

To say the once-mighty club have been on a helter-skelter ride in recent years is a gross understatement. In the space of four seasons, Fiorentina have gone on a spectacular downward spiral, slumping from Champions League victories against Manchester United to relegation and then liquidation, before being born again last season as runaway Serie C2, Group B (Fourth Division) winners under the new name of 'Florentia Viola'.

Thirteen months ago, Fiorentina were relegated to Serie B after a dramatic season marked by never-ending uncertainty about both the club's finances and the fate of owner Vittorio Cecchi Gori. Within two months of relegation, the club were placed in a form of receivership.

By the beginning of last August, the Football League had refused to register Fiorentina for the Serie B season on the basis the club were in liquidation. At the time, Fiorentina reported debts of £12 million, much of it attributable to five months' backpay owed to players.

To a large extent, the collapse had come as no surprise. Throughout the past decade, the club's finances had become tied up with those of cinema producer Cecchi Gori, whose late father had bought an 89 per cent majority shareholding in 1990.

Back up the ladder...the Florentia Viola celebrate their Serie C2 triumph

Things began to look problematic in the summer of 2001, when it was revealed Cecchi Gori was under investigation for 'false accounting', ie cooking the books, embezzlement and money laundering. In particular, he was accused of having transferred significant sums of money from Fiorentina to his family financial holding company, Fin.Ma.Vi.

When news of the investigation broke, most observers speculated that it would only be a matter of time before Cecchi Gori would sell Fiorentina. Despite several promises to that effect, however, and despite being vociferously encouraged to sell by the Fiorentina fans, Cecchi Gori declined, arguing that he had never received a decent offer. In the end, he took Fiorentina, club name and all, down with him. By May of this year, however, the club were definitively on the way back up, after a season in which at least five elements – new owner Diego Della Valle, technical director Giovanni Galli, coach Alberto Cavasin, prolific goalscorer Christian Rigano and the Fiorentina fans – had played key roles.

Della Valle to the rescue

First place in the order of merit has to go to Della Valle, a Tuscan businessman who commands a £160m leather and shoe empire. Della Valle was the knight in shining armour who rode over the hill last August to buy out 'Fiorentina 1926 Florentia', the club that had been hastily created from the ashes of Fiorentina by Florence city mayor Leonardo Domenici.

Having originally appointed former Roma and Sampdoria defender Pietro Vierchowod as coach in August, Della Valle won his spurs as a new club owner by taking the difficult decision to sack Vierchowod after just two months, replacing him with the former Lecce coach Cavasin.

Having picked up just 13 points in nine games under Vierchowod, 'Florentia Viola' never looked back under Cavasin. They took 57 points from 25 games to win their Serie C2 group by 11 points from Rimini.

Della Valle also had the good idea of appointing Galli as his technical director, thus ensuring himself the services of a former Fiorentina goalkeeper intimately

● 26/06/03...Officials and players desperately try to save Marc-Vivien Foe

● 26/06/03...The FIFA show goes on as France beat Turkey in Paris

● 29/06/03...France and Cameroon players pay tribute to Foe after the Confederations Cup Final

familiar with the club's peculiar environment. Galli can claim some of the credit for two important coups linked to the 'Florentia' squad – the purchase of little-known striker Rigano from Third Division Taranto and the fact that 36-year-old former Juventus and Italy stalwart Angelo Di Livio opted to stay on as captain rather than see out his career at a higher level.

In the end, 29-year-old Rigano repaid 'Florentia' handsomely, scoring 30 goals in a triumphant season that prompted Di Livio to ask just why Rigano had gone unnoticed in the lower divisions for so long. As for Di Livio, his season did not end in perfect fairytale manner since he tore the cruciate ligaments in his right knee in January, missing out on the rest of the promotion run.

Remarkably, though, in a recent autobiography significantly entitled *I'm Staying Here*, Di Livio has expressed the hope that his career is not yet over and that he will one day return to the field in the Fiorentina colours. Whatever the future, there is little doubt that in the first half of the season at least, Di Livio's experience contributed greatly to building a new team in which he was the only player with a top-class track record.

If the contribution of Della Valle, Galli, Cavasin, Di Livio, Rigano *et al* is obvious enough, what about the fans? For once, the often ill-tempered Fiorentina *tifosi* covered themselves in glory. For example, when the club started pre-season training last August with a squad comprising mainly youth team players (the likes of Brazilian Adriano, Portugal's Nuno Gomes, Enrico Chiesa, Roberto Baronio and Alessandro Pierini had all long since moved on), crowds of 2,000 and more regularly turned up to watch.

Furthermore, the fans put their money on the table with 16,638 buying season tickets to establish a new record for Serie C2. On top of that, the supporters, often regarded as among the most troublesome in Italy, travelled to unlikely destinations such as Fano, Gubbio, Poggibonsi and Montevarchi in huge numbers, without once causing public order problems.

For Cavasin, the experience of the past season has been rewarding both professionally and from a human viewpoint. Speaking to *La Gazzetta Dello Sport* in May, he emphasised the fact that 'Florentia Viola' had attracted a new, family-oriented fan base.

> 'I have never felt such sensations as I have here. There was a spirit of collaboration, the stadium has become a joyful place'
>
> ***Coach Alberto Cavasin***

"Never in my career have I experienced the sensations I felt here," he said. "There was a spirit of collaboration, people who had not been to the stadium for 10 years returned and did so with their families because the Franchi stadium had become a joyful place, not some sort of heavily defended fortress. It was the same at away matches – we had days when you could mix the football with a good meal and sightseeing."

If Cavasin sounds enthusiastic about his first season at 'Florentia Viola', the same can be said of Della Valle, who underlined his commitment to the cause by splashing out £1.5m to buy back the club's original name from the state receiver's office. (Fiorentina had been officially registered as insolvent by a Florence court on September 27 last year).

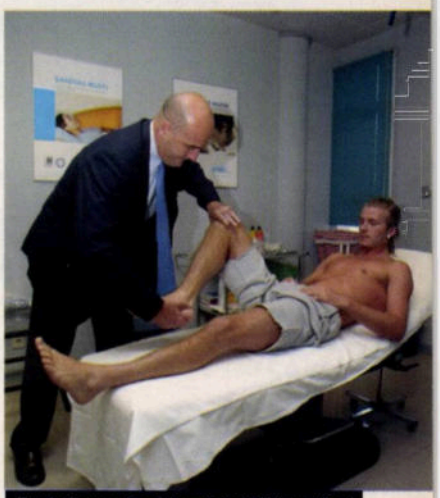
All in all, Della Valle has probably spent around £6m in his first season. Yet, undeterred by that outlay, he and his advisors are already planning both the construction of a new training centre and the launch of perhaps 20 per cent of the club's shareholding on the stock market. This latter move is inevitably designed to avoid the club's fate being too closely linked to the financial and economic fate of one man, as in the case of Cecchi Gori.

Nor does the good news end there. As Fiorentina prepare for next season, there is the tantalising possibility that they could yet make a leapfrog promotion into Serie B, thus missing out on Serie C1. That could come about thanks to reform of Serie B (currently under consideration by the federation) which would see it played out on a two-group, regional basis.

Be it in Serie B (Division Two) or Serie C2 (Division Three), Fiorentina are likely to make more waves next season. A proud, 77-year football history has returned to take its rightful place on the centre stage of Italian soccer.

Notes & quotes

"A chimps tea party."
David Beckham's much-hyped arrival at Real Madrid leaves Bayern Munich general manager Uli Hoeness cold.



Real circus...Beckham's 'public' medical

"I know Barcelona is a difficult club but accepting that fact makes the job easier."
New Barcelona coach Frank Rijkaard on the pros and cons of the task ahead of him.

"To always stay in Belgian football, like Jan Ceulemans did, is not my thing."
Belgium striker Wesley Sonck after leaving Genk for Ajax.

"Of course I would have preferred it if he had bought a Russian club instead, especially since he has made all his money in Russia by using the country's natural wealth, its oil, gas and other resources."
Vyacheslav Koloskov, the head of the Russian federation, regrets the decision of Roman Abramovich to invest in Chelsea.

The month in pictures

● 02/07/03...Roman Abramovich is unveiled as the new owner of Chelsea

● 02/07/03...David Beckham signs for Real Madrid and is presented with the number 23 shirt by honorary club president Alfredo Di Stefano

● 02/07/03...Brett Emerton receives Oceania's player of the year award

● 05/07/03...Latvia win the three-team Baltic Cup after drawing with Estonia

GLOBAL VIEW

Paul Gardner

Sun always shines on the Under-17s

CHINA, 1985. The very first World Under-17 Championship (it was Under-16 in those days) had just finished, with Nigeria beating Germany 2-0 in the Final. Here we were, hundreds of us, players, coaches, officials, journalists, VIPs, finishing off a 10-course banquet in Beijing's Great Wall Hotel.

Up on the dais, Sepp Blatter was announcing the award winners. "And now...the Golden Ball for the Best Player"...pause, slow unfolding of the paper..."The winner...from Brazil..."

The name was drowned out in cheers. At the table next to me the entire Brazilian team erupted to their feet, clapping and cheering and laughing. Their number 10, the chubby little William, had won, and they fell all over him. As William pulled himself loose from the melee and headed towards the platform, one of his team-mates grabbed him and planted a loving kiss on his cheek. Impossible not to be moved. By now everyone in that vast room was standing, smiling, applauding.

I treasure that moment, and I feel the echo of its emotions at every Under-17 championship. This is a different competition. For me it is the most enjoyable of the FIFA events. All the other FIFA tournaments are played by adults. These are boys, they bring a different atmosphere...a different game. And, yes, this I believe, a *better* game. A purer game, free of so many of the maladies that afflict the adult game. The adults have added so much that is restrictive to the sport: they deny space, they track back, they defend in numbers.

I'm not arguing that the boys don't do those things, simply that they don't do them very well. What the boys want to do is play football, not chess, and they want to have fun.

Later is the time for all that tactical cleverness that saps the very life from the game. Quite the opposite to what happens with the Under-17s, who *add* life and zest and daring.

I said it's a better game. That will be challenged – ridiculed no doubt – on the grounds that the boys are too naive to know any better. Maybe – but no one is going to tell me that the adult game is more *enjoyable* to watch.

That is one of the few sad things about the Under-17s. It is always difficult to get fans to turn up. In China in 1985, it was all arranged – spectators were brought in by the truck load, marched to their seats and told when to cheer.

In Canada in 1987 and in Scotland in 1989, it was back to reality. The crowds were poor. Until... one magical sunny evening in Edinburgh. Scotland had reached the semi-finals, the word had finally got round that the football was something special. The game started nearly an hour late. They had expected maybe 15,000 fans "if we're lucky" – they got 28,555. And they got a wonderful game.

Luis Figo played in that game. I'll confess, I don't recall him. Others I do. Argentina's Fernando Redondo in 1985, blond and upright, a player who seemed able to glide gracefully through everything. The lanky Nwankwo Kanu in 1993 – you had to notice him as he led Nigeria to victory over Ghana in the Final. And Ronaldo, of course – what did he look like, the young Ronaldo, people ask me? I don't know, I never saw him. One thing boys' football does have in common with the senior game is perversity. Ronaldo was in the 1993 Brazil team – which failed to qualify!

Enough. This isn't about names and stars. It's about a real game being played at its basic best, with an honesty that touches the heart.

Sure, there have been scandals. In 1989 the Portugal keeper was sent home for mooning at Scottish fans. And problems with age cheating – the suspicions will continue, it's a difficult thing to prove.

But the football shines through. It seems to be blessed with eternally sunny evenings. Here we are again, another small stadium, this one in Massa in central Italy. Near the end of the first half. The German defenders are in trouble. They slam the ball away, but no further than Brazil's captain, Adriano. His control is instant, and without a moment's pause he dribbles right at the heart of the packed defence. With speed, with deception, with control, he is past *four defenders*...the keeper comes out, and with a dip of the shoulder, Adriano wrongfoots him and rolls the ball firmly into the empty net.

> **'The boys bring a different atmosphere...a better game, free from the maladies that afflict the adult game'**

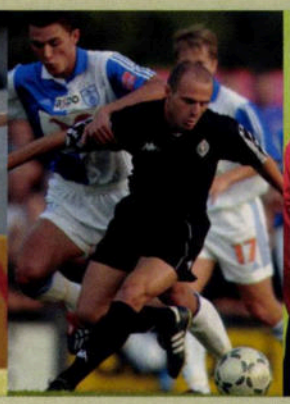
Breathtaking football. But it was followed by something that no adult game would give you. As they turned to walk back upfield, two of the German defenders were softly, clapping their hands, unable to resist a silent tribute to their opponent.

I cannot make out a case for the World Under-17 Championship being *useful* to adult soccer. So very few of the players – maybe five per cent – go on to triumph at the senior level. But I think that's what I like about it, and what gives it its strength. Its values are its own, the purer values of the boys' game. A two-yearly reminder of just what is beautiful about Pele's Beautiful Game, the cheers and the tears, that is its own reward.

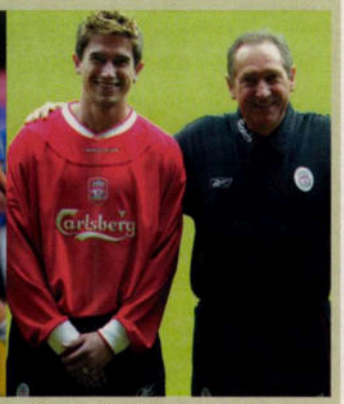
And the hell with usefulness.

● *The 2003 World Under-17 Championship is being staged in Finland from August 13-30.*

● 07/07/03...Besiktas beat Dinamo Zagreb on penalties after a 1-1 draw in a friendly



● 08/07/03...Grasshopper overcome Partizan Belgrade 3-1 in their pre-season meeting



● 10/07/03...Harry Kewell is presented to the media by his new club Liverpool

Keir Radnedge

MEDIAWATCH

News and views from the world's press

Hackers have the last laugh

SPAIN: "Hackers have played a nasty trick on the Colombian federation, breaking into the official website and converting Carlos Valderrama into national coach instead of Francisco Maturana."
– Spanish news agency EFE on the wicked wonders of modern technology.

Roman road is paved with naffness

UK: "Abramovich now owns a couple of Legoland hotels, a fish restaurant called Fishnets, an Italian gaff called Canaletto's, an Irish establishment called Arkles (sic) and a 'nite spot' called Purple 'where you can rub shoulders with socialites, sports stars, celebs and models'.

"If there is a more intensive concentration of naffness in the whole of south-west London then I have not encountered it."
– Patrick Collins, in the Mail on Sunday, *pondering the taste and judgment of multi-millionaire Roman Abramovich, Chelsea's new owner.*

Raul's goal obsession

BELGIUM: "When I scored a goal I dreamed I was Maradona but when Raul scored a goal he thought only about scoring a second – and when he'd scored two he thought only about scoring a third."
– Real Madrid's skipper remembered, and explained, by former youth club team-mate Jose Luis Medina in Foot *magazine.*

Reflection on Foe's death

FRANCE: "Difficult decision though it was, the Confederations Cup Final between France and Cameroon had to go ahead, despite the death of Marc-Vivien Foe. This is because one of the functions of sport in our society is to help us maintain our belief in the value of life – as well as in the memory of those we have lost. It was a death that reflected nothing on football. But it should serve, at the least, as a warning to lower our demands.

"After the Cup of Fatigue (2002), here we have the Cup of Death (2003). The progression is clear enough to suffice. We must accept fewer matches, fewer pointless competitions, fewer business demands...and far fewer slow-motion replays of unseeing eyes and the indecent spectacle of death in the afternoon."
– France Football *on the death of Marc-Vivien Foe.*

Silvio settles the score

UK: "To journalists who ask embarrassing questions, Silvio Berlusconi is apt to demand: 'Do you want to be beaten up now or shall I wait for you outside?'"
– the Sunday Times *on how Milan's owner (and Italy's Prime Minister) maintains a Champions League-winning image.*

Ronaldinho's way with words

SPAIN: "According to his associates and from what Ronaldinho was saying in private here over the weekend, his ambition is to play for Real Madrid as soon as possible."
– Marca *on July 6.*

UK: "Ronaldinho last night revealed in an exclusive interview that he is ready to join Manchester United 'immediately'. The Brazilian superstar is expected to be unveiled at Old Trafford on Tuesday and told us he has no doubts over where his future lies, saying: 'United is what I want and I am ready to move immediately.'"
– News of the World *on July 13.*

FRANCE: "I am thrilled to be here. I've always dreamed of playing for Barcelona ever since I was a small boy."
– Ronaldinho to L'Equipe, *July 21.*

WORLD SOCCER/CNN TEAM OF THE MONTH

FINAL POLL for 2002-03

1	Milan
2	Juventus
3	Real Madrid
4	Boca Juniors
5	Manchester United
6	FC Porto
7	Santos
8	River Plate
9	Bayern Munich
10	Internazionale

Notes & quotes

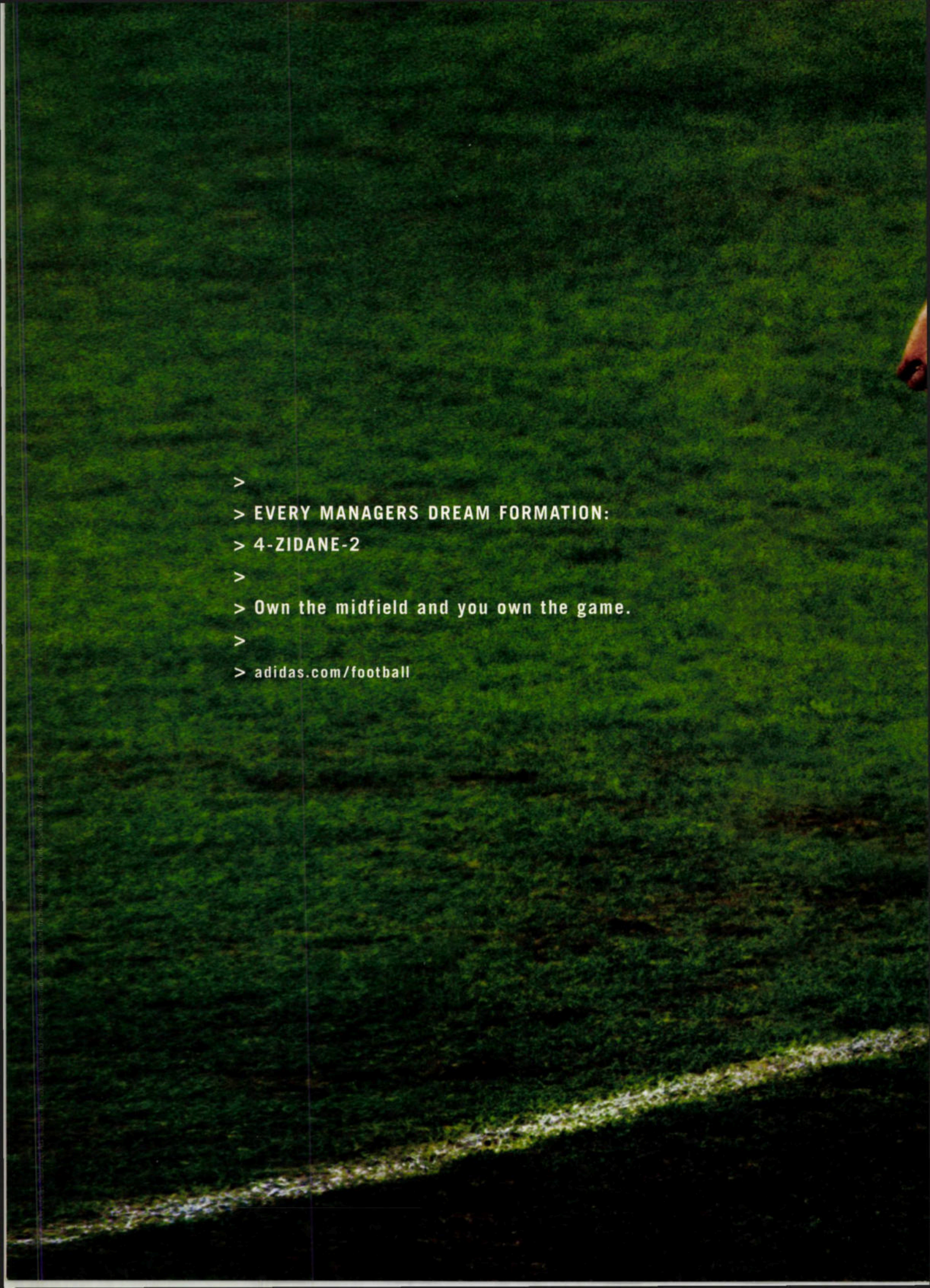
"We have too many professionals here. Well-paid players on the fringes of the first team just don't want to go and are happy to accept the role of tourists."
Monaco director Henri Biancheri bemoans all the dead capital sitting in the stands on matchdays.

"Mexican football is like a timebomb."
Ricardo Lavolpe finds his role as coach of Mexico more than a little stressful.

"I've come to a much stronger League. French teams never last long in the Champions League. Spanish sides always go far."
Sonny Anderson attempts to justify his move from French champions Lyon to modest Spanish side Villarreal.

Minding the gaps...Pele's Brazil

"They said we had defensive problems but no one recognised that we knew how to fill in gaps on the pitch. We were the Real Madrid of our day."
Mario Zagallo compares his Brazilian World Cup-winning team of 1970 with the current all-star line-up at the Bernabeu.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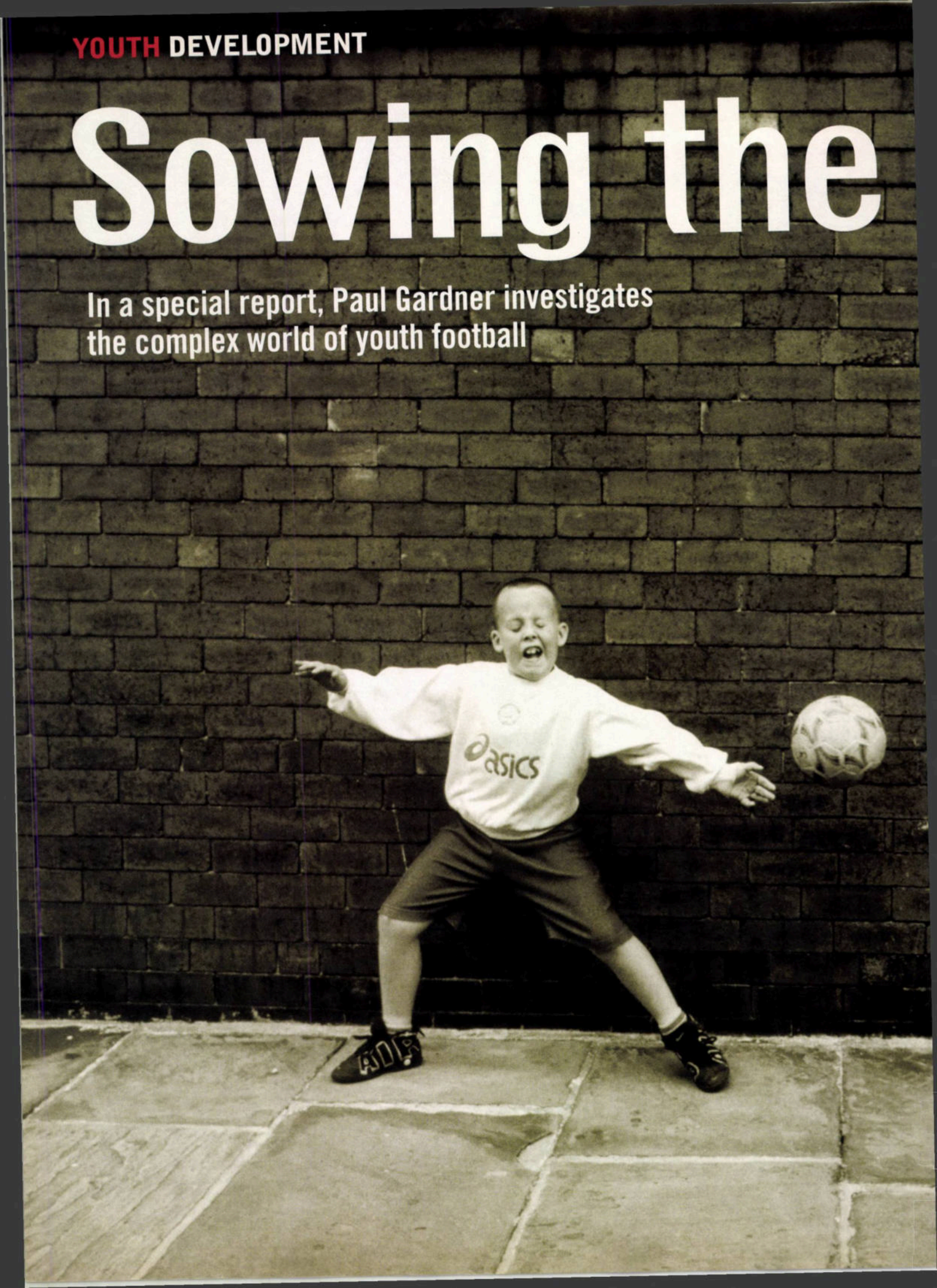
Sowing the

In a special report, Paul Gardner investigates the complex world of youth football



seeds

If you can look into the seeds of time

And say which grain will grow and

which will not

Speak then to me...

Shakespeare, Macbeth

IS THERE anyone in football who can do that, who can peer into the future of young players and confidently tell us which kids are going to make it? The experts – the youth coaches – should be able to; isn't that what they're paid to do? But can they do it?

In 1975 I was gathering material for a book, and needed to interview two promising teenage players. I spoke with the youth coaches at two top division clubs, one English, one Italian. Each recommended a 16-year-old player of theirs who they considered to be headed for the big time. Neither player even came close.

Eighteen years later, I updated the book. Same procedure, this time with an English, an Italian and an Argentinian coach – who recommended three more youngsters. Again, none of them has made it.

A 100 per cent failure rate for the experts. The journalist – me, that is – did no better. I had personally selected a young Brazilian who had greatly impressed me and he, too, failed to make it.

The difficulty – or is it the impossibility? – of predicting which soccer "grains will grow and which will not" has to be heavily underlined because it bedevils the entire field of youth development.

It seems that picking the best from a group of teenagers entails a judgment that can reflect only current form. This key fact is not exactly a secret. It is known to everyone involved in youth soccer. The chances of a boy advancing through a club's youth scheme to become a regular starter in the senior team are small indeed. Fewer than five per cent make the transition.

It's not just football. All sports have the same problem – even individual sports such as tennis, where highly skilled – and personalised – coaching is applied. The list of winners of the Wimbledon Boys (18-year-old) title is hardly a reliable guide to future champions.

Boys, it seems, will be boys – before they are tennis players or footballers. And the essence of boyhood includes hefty doses of things like freedom, experimentation, fun and frivolity, indiscipline, mood swings, contrariness, lack of concentration...a veritable catalogue of attitudes guaranteed to make growing up uncharted and unchartable territory.

The late Alec Stock, who ran an admired youth

scheme when he was manager of Queen's Park Rangers in 1967, once said: "The failure rate is high, very high, and all any manager can do is to bring his youngsters along properly, discipline them, train them thoroughly, coach them intelligently, encourage them, give them opportunity, fill them with good habits and hope for the best."

Hope for the best? Surely, in 2003, we can do better than that? It is inconceivable that the world's top clubs should now be investing millions in youth schemes if their success relies on nothing more solid than hoping for the best.

Possibly. But a hard look at the modern, highly-financed, often lavishly-equipped academies suggests that they are not spectacularly efficient at doing their job. I take that job to be turning out a steady stream of top-class players for the club's senior team. That seems to me the obvious aim, and its success can be readily measured.

All that is necessary is a look at the first teams of those clubs that have extensive youth set-ups. How many starters for, say, Milan or Juventus or Real Madrid or Bayern Munich are products of their youth divisions? As a generalisation, the answer is not many. Among last season's starting XIs, Bayern Munich and Juventus had none, Milan and Real Madrid had two each. Manchester United, with five, were way above average. It's not much better in South America, where Boca Juniors had three and River Plate four.

'A hard look at the modern academies suggests they are not spectacularly efficient at doing their job – turning out top-class players'

The figures confirm what is already apparent. The big clubs build their success on buying – often for enormous fees – star players. Players who have been developed by other clubs. Which ought to mean that the other clubs (and they are frequently smaller clubs) have better youth schemes. Not really – it is just another of the many anomalies that underline the totally random nature of the world of youth football. This is despite that world being massively more organised than it has ever been.

It is revealing to look at the changing vocabulary of youth football (I am talking here primarily of boys up to the age of 16). There was a time when young players were 'discovered'. Back in the 1940s there used to be a half-joking British belief that any professional club could find new players – good players – by whistling down a mine shaft in north-east England or Scotland, and taking the first youngster who came up. It was the same deal in Brazil – just go out of the cities and look in the interior of the country, and there was talent galore.

But these days, how likely is it – even in Africa or Central America – that there are extraordinarily talented teenagers just waiting to be discovered? How long could such players remain hidden when their potential value is surely known to the pervasive network of coaches, scouts and friends, not to mention parents?

Boys are no longer discovered. They are 'identified' – and the earlier the better – after which they will quickly be signed up by a pro team, or an agent, or maybe even a sponsor (as in the case of Freddy Adu – see page 25 – the 14-year-old Ghana-born player, now an American citizen, who in May 2003 was signed by Nike to a £650,000 multi-year endorsement deal).

At pro clubs, kids used to be trained or coached. Nowadays they are developed. Again, the word itself is highly significant. It implies so much more than mere soccer coaching.

Alternative career

There has, thankfully, been a widespread recognition that training boys to be footballers, and only footballers, and then simply abandoning the huge majority for whom things don't work out is no longer good enough.

No modern club would think of launching a youth scheme that did not include general education. Most, in fact, give specialised training for a possible alternative career, usually sports-related.

Another new term has appeared. We have the 'academy', a suitably academic name for a training centre that takes in a lot more than tactics and technique.

There can be no resisting this trend. Standards of living and education have risen and, more pointedly, the amount of money in the sport has made multi-millionaire media idols of its top players. The modern football club cannot shun its social responsibilities. It cannot repeat –

CASE STUDY SANTOS

Pressure test...teenage playmaker Diego

Kids lead Leao's revolution

EMERSON LEAO had a brief, unhappy spell coaching Brazil. But he left a powerful legacy. In his first match as national coach he raised eyebrows by giving debuts to centre-back Lucio and striker Adriano – both are now proven international stars.

It was not long before Leao gave further proof of his ability to spot and groom young talent. Last year he took over at Santos. In 2000 the club had nearly broken the bank, signing big-name players in a vain attempt to win their first Brazilian national championship. And then Leao led them to the title with a wage bill that was just 20 per cent of what it had been in 2000.

Once more Leao put his faith in youth. None of his first-choice players was over 27, and the most important members of the team were the teenage duo of playmaker Diego and winger Robinho.

"I was lucky in that when I took over, Santos had no games for two months," Leao recalls. "It gave me time to see what we had. I was immediately struck by the individual ability, and then it was my task to organise the collective capacity. There was some money available for reinforcements, but I decided to abort all such plans. I took a calculated risk, but it was well calculated, and in the end nobody had any regrets."

Leao is entitled to his triumphalist tone when he points out that "many people thought that Diego and Robinho wouldn't stand the pressure of playing in the first team. They were proved wrong. Then they said that these players were too young to win the title, and they were proved wrong once more."

But the coach is quick to underline that Diego and Robinho are not yet the finished articles. "They've passed the first test in their professional careers," he says. "But they're still children. They need the strong arm of a father and the protective wing of a mother, though it might not be only their parents who fulfil this role. It could also be team-mates, coaches or directors."

The partnership between coach and wonderkids could soon be coming to an end. "The Brazil of today is not the same as the Brazil of yesterday," says Leao. "The fact is that nowadays it's very difficult to keep a team together for two years, and I don't believe Santos will manage it. The commercial side speaks louder than the realities of football."

But without the economic problems of the Brazilian game, Diego and Robinho might have had to wait longer for their opportunity.

Tim Vickery

even in much milder form – the child labour abuses of the rapacious capitalists of the 19th century.

There are, inevitably, abuses. In particular there has been an unsavoury trade in young Africans and South Americans, lured to Europe not by clubs but by 'operators' of varying degrees of probity, with the promise of a lucrative professional contract. Too many have ended up abandoned in a foreign country. In 2001 FIFA acted to end this scandal by banning the international transfer of players under the age of 18.

When vocational training was in its infancy 36 years ago, Alec Stock said he would not encourage his young players to go in for it. "I want them to be so obsessed with football that they have no time, no energy, no wish to study for a job they might not start for 10 or 15 years," he said. "It is my experience that young people are only passionately addicted to one thing at a time. I want total commitment, nothing less."

Nobody, it is safe to say, would dare utter such hostile ideas today. Yet Howard Wilkinson, when he was the English FA's technical director in 2000, hinted at something similar. "What I'm trying to get across to the people who run the new club academies is that they're not just about providing better facilities or devising cleverer practice routines," he said. "They are about getting into the heads of the young players to encourage them to subjugate themselves to the sport."

It is my belief that plenty of today's coaches agree with that reasoning. This stance can be dismissed as nothing more than a wish for a return to 'the good old days' when things were so much simpler. But it undoubtedly contains a central truth.

American myth

If the general education part of the academy syllabus is to be taken seriously, then it is more than likely to be a distraction. The Americans have a close-up view of the problem. It is held that the American way of producing pro athletes is for them to go to college (on athletic scholarships) and get the best of both worlds there. Really, a myth. College basketball and gridiron are so important and bring in so much money that the players' life in college is all about their sports; academic issues invariably come off second best should there be any conflict.

But for soccer, a college sport with no clout whatever, the theory is disastrous. For decades the 'student-athletes' produced by college soccer, whatever may have been their status as students, were clearly inadequate as players. When the pro league MLS was created in 1996, one of its first actions was to set up its Project-40 programme – to entice promising players to skip college soccer and join MLS clubs

CASE STUDY RIVER PLATE

River's talent runs deep

Honours graduate...Javier Saviola

FOR YEARS, Jose Pekerman was the man behind Argentina's run of success at youth level. With the benefit of experience, he puts his finger squarely on one of the key differences between youth development work in Europe and South America.

"In Europe, the state provides much more to the people in terms of benefits," he says. "So the youth is first an athlete, and second a footballer. With us it's the other way round. The kid is first a footballer, and then we have to work with him in other aspects, such as nutrition."

No club exemplifies this reality better than River Plate. The Buenos Aires club have no equals as producers of top-quality players. Many of their graduates, such as Pablo Aimar, Javier Saviola, Andres D'Alessandro, Ariel Ortega and Marcelo Gallardo are small, slight figures who may have been overlooked elsewhere.

"The River Plate player is different," says Delem, the Brazilian who spent 13 years in charge of the club's youth development work. "In Buenos Aires the clubs want to win youth titles. But River's aim is always to promote players through the system. It's preferable to promote a player who is ready up to the next level even if it means losing a championship.

"Normally the other clubs choose big players in order to achieve victories. But River go for talented players and invest in them without worrying about their size. They are brought to the club and given a proper diet and everything they need to develop their potential."

The club do much more than take care of the youngsters' physical development. The Monumental stadium houses educational facilities of all levels. The River Plate juniors sleep, train, work and study on site.

Another reason for the success of the River youth programme is the fact that, in a highly-centralised country, they take the trouble to look beyond Buenos Aires. The club boasts a truly national network of scouts. Saviola grew up in the shadow of the club and D'Alessandro is a hometown boy. But the likes of Aimar, Ortega and Martin Demichelis – now bound for Bayern Munich – all come from far-flung provinces.

There is, though, an unfortunate side to the club's extraordinary record of churning out footballing talent. When they sold striker Enrique Omar Sivori to Juventus in the late 1950s, River were able to build a new stand from the proceeds of the deal. Now they sell and sell, but it scarcely seems to make a dent in the club's huge debt.

Tim Vickery

straight from high school. From the strictly football point of view the academies – by the organised teaching of the sport – are attempting to replace what was a virtually natural process in the past, a part of growing up. And they are finding it difficult. They are finding that some vital ingredients of the old formula have gone missing.

This is not primarily the fault of the academies. It is the result of changing lifestyles and social patterns. To take the obvious example, the disappearance of street soccer in the advanced countries.

Danger now lurks in the streets – too much traffic, too much crime. Anyway, what was once acceptable is now a public nuisance. In 2000 that was made clear in the northern English city of Bradford, where the council warned youngsters not to play in the streets. Windows were being broken, gardens damaged and residents upset. The kids were told to play in the parks and leisure facilities.

In theory, the loss of street soccer should not matter. After all, it was always a crude activity played on concrete, without proper equipment, probably even with a lopsided ball. Its replacement – the organised youth soccer of the academies – should be much better.

This is clearly not the case. In May 2001 youth directors from top European clubs including Manchester United, Ajax, Barcelona and Bayern Munich gathered in Geneva to mull over their programmes. They issued an extraordinary statement: the loss of street soccer was hurting youth development. Here were the rich top clubs, with money, facilities, organisation and qualified coaches admitting they needed street soccer – which never had any of those things.

The people's game...youngsters indulge in street soccer in Colombia

The contradiction goes to the heart of the dilemma of youth development. Is it possible, within the increasingly organised and supervised structure of youth soccer, to retain the spontaneity and individual creativity that the anarchy of street soccer bred?

To simplify matters, I will roll individuality, creativity, spontaneity and artistry into one word, and call it flair. It is the lack of flair players that worries the European coaches. The academies are evidently not a reliable source of such players.

It is no accident that so many of the exciting flair players in Europe are African or Latin American. Is that because the boys on those continents grow up in a looser system, with less organised coaching? A tempting rationale, but of course there is no proof.

Anyway, the French have certainly shown that a well-organised, nationally supervised network of coaching schools can produce flair players. Who could dispute the credentials of Zinedine Zidane or Thierry Henry or Robert Pires? And what about the much-praised Ajax school?

And now here come the Germans, alarmed by the same problem, the shortage of flair players. With surely irresistible efficiency, the German federation will spend £7m a year on a new plan for 390 centres of excellence where 1,200 licensed coaches under 29 regional bosses will emphasise the development of individual skills among 20,000 11 to 17-year-old players.

> 'Top European clubs have lamented that the loss of street soccer is hurting youth development'

If any nation can solve the problem, surely it will be Germany. But one wonders. A similar transformation took place in the 1950s, when Sepp Herberger reorganised the entire structure of German soccer – with much the same aim: to bring the technical level of the German player up to the best (in those days that meant the Hungarians).

Q&A Heighway, Queiroz, Santisteban

Ask the experts

At what age should players start training with pro clubs?

STEVE HEIGHWAY, director, Liverpool youth academy: Probably about eight years old, provided they are being coached at a pro club that has the set-up to deal with them: that's the facilities, the staff and the philosophy to create an environment in which they can flourish. There are some clubs I wouldn't let my kids anywhere near.

CARLOS QUEIROZ, Real Madrid coach, former coach of Portuguese national youth teams: It depends on the players' skills. For a boy with great potential, I'd say no later than 12 or 13. But for me it's not so much the age that matters as the coaching process. You can have a fantastic talent who may not develop if he is in the wrong environment, or a player with low potential who can surprise you in the right environment. The atmosphere and the methodology are the keys. There is nothing wrong with the professional environment for young boys provided it is right. If it is just about winning, that is wrong.

JUAN SANTISTEBAN, coach of Spanish national youth and Under-21 teams: If a player is well advised and surrounded by people he can trust then the sooner the better. Training together with professional players will help him improve rapidly and pick up good habits from the start. Of course, it is important that he does not get carried away just because he is training with the top players, but if a youngster is exposed to this environment bit by bit he will benefit enormously.

What is the most important element to be considered in the training of pre-teen youngsters?

Heighway: Technical development with ball contact, and enjoyment. At eight, it's 100 per cent about fun. By the age of 11, they're ready for more technical input, and you can be more rigorous with the technical work.

Queiroz: The technical side – ball skills. That should be the main part of a player's education when he is seven or eight or nine or 10 – in fact, the main part till the end of his career. Sometimes we overload on the physical part, but I believe it is skill, fantasy and creativity that makes the difference between winners and losers.

Santisteban: Ball work. You have to make sure that the ball is always at the forefront of the work you do. That is the only way to encourage good technique right from the start – the emphasis must always be on quality. The advantage that youngsters have is that they pick up technical things very easily, but that will happen only if you work with the ball all the time. Fitness and the physical side of things will come as a natural side-effect of ball work, not as something separate. It's important to remember that working with the ball is always the most enjoyable aspect for youngsters.

Is there a training 'secret' that can ensure the production of star players?

Heighway: Simplicity – not complicating young players or the game. Football is still about pass and move, about attitude and about desire. It's not changed. It's not scientific. People ask what we did to make Steven Gerrard or Michael Owen into great players, but they did it themselves – we just created the environment, and they fed off it. It's like an actor: give him a great script and he'll give a great performance. Give him a bad one and he can't do anything with it.

Queiroz: Sometimes we are afraid to talk about the good side of winning, of competition. Look at Pele or Maradona, they didn't have great coaches when they were young, but they were part of a very competitive system – street soccer. That's a survivor's game – if you don't win, you don't play; all you can do is stand and watch. There must be a competitive system, but one in which you have the freedom to make things happen, and the freedom to make mistakes.

Santisteban: Hard work is the vital ingredient. Without that, no player will ever become a star. The other thing is spending as much time as possible with the ball. When I was young everyone played football on the streets after school, so we were playing all the time. Now that isn't so common, so you have to get the youngsters playing as much as possible so that they feel completely comfortable with the ball at their feet.

Which is the greater danger to the development of creative players – under-coaching or over-coaching?

Heighway: The biggest danger is coaching the team rather than the player. The team is not important. We have to say that and believe it. I have to convince my coaches of that. Coaches feel more comfortable developing a team than working with a magnificently skilful left-winger because the coaches often don't have the same skills as the player. The only team that has to win games at Liverpool is the first team. Everything below that is about player development. You'll win games with talented individuals anyway.

Queiroz: It is the wrong sort of coaching that is the biggest danger. A young boy may spend a lot of hours, maybe six hours, during the day expecting to play football, looking forward to it – and then you disappoint him by making him run and do things he doesn't understand. He has his dreams, he knows everything about football, he's looking for that 'magic moment'. He's wondering: 'Where is the football I dreamed of all day, that I came here to play?' He loves to score and pass and dribble, and he comes and does an hour of running. He will move to another sport.

Santisteban: Over-coaching can be a danger because young players thrive on enthusiasm, so you don't want them to lose that or their spontaneity. But they aren't stupid and they usually know when they are being pushed too hard.

What is the biggest no-no in youth training?

Heighway: Coaches who work off a list of practices and just reproduce them from a book year after year rather than designing sessions to suit the players' needs.

Queiroz: Coaching that kills a boy's expectations, his dreams.

Santisteban: As a youth team coach you must have great patience. The worst mistake is to insult players or lose your temper. The last thing you want to do is to give a player a complex about playing. Your job is to help, advise and coax them forward. If they do things wrong you have to explain to them how to improve, but it is always best to do it in a relaxed, good-humoured way. They pick up bad habits just as quickly as good habits, so you must have enough skill yourself to be able to show them how to do things the right way. But you mustn't try and push players too hard or drum their natural skills out of them.

Which qualities do you look for first in a pre-teen player that would make you want to sign him?

Heighway: There's not a check-list, it's more a gut feeling. We look for athleticism and an ability to work with the ball. They're usually the dribblers at that age, with good balance. They need to have a good level of speed – not necessarily fast but if they can move well then you can teach them to run faster. There's a general rule that if they are fast at 17 they were probably fast at eight too. Then you look at their personality: can they look you in the eyes, do they shake hands and talk to you? Overall it's a case of 'Does he stand out?' Even the future centre-backs start off the same: dribbling everywhere and taking over the game. Talent comes first. You can teach defensive skills later.

Queiroz: I look for three things: technique – the quality of his first touch and his passing; speed – I mean football speed, game intelligence, vision, the ability to make decisions more quickly than the others; a positive attitude – he must be having fun in the game, he can play all day, it is never boring to him.

Santisteban: The most important characteristic is to have a winning mentality. I've been lucky to work with some great footballers in my time both as a player and a coach, but the greatest of all was Di Stefano because he was a born winner. And when I say a winning mentality, I mean it in the best sense of the word, not winning at all costs but just a very strong intense desire to win. The next thing they need is technical quality, without that you can't reach the top. Physique and strength is something I don't get too worried about because that will come with time.

Interviews: Gavin Willacy, Paul Gardner, Simon Baskett

CASE STUDY WAYNE ROONEY

Cashing in

Gavin Willacy on the phenomenal rise of Everton's teenage striker

DURING the otherwise quiet pre-season on Merseyside, the build-up to the 2002-03 Premiership kick-off was swamped with talk of 'the new Michael Owen'. Twelve explosive months later Everton's Wayne Rooney is rarely compared to his England strike partner: he is a superstar himself.

By Christmas last year, Rooney had signed up with the Proactive Sports Management agency, much to the chagrin of former agent Peter McIntosh (who seems oblivious to the moral questions about being an agent for a schoolboy). Under Proactive's guidance, Rooney signed a professional contract which took his wages from £50 to £15,000 a week, and clinched several massive endorsements.

In contrast to most young graduates to the first team, who receive a modest first contract of perhaps £50,000 a year, Rooney was able to command a deal matching him with Everton's highest earners.

In his contract is an image rights clause – for every Everton shirt sold with 'ROONEY' on the back, the local hero is believed to be paid £3. At that rate, he is close to making £1million on shirt sales alone. A Rooney corner is being set up at their megastore. So much for not over-hyping the youngster. Everton were unable to prevent Sky broadcasting a documentary called, of course, *Wayne's World*.

Rooney has also signed a boot deal with Nike, apparently worth £250,000 a year over eight years. There is also talk of a Rooney clothing range, though no footballer has managed to pull that off with any success, let alone a monosyllabic and hardly beautiful adolescent.

The majority of Rooney merchandise will no doubt be sold (illegally) on market stalls from Toxteth to Thailand.

What the Rooney phenomenon has underlined is that another American trait is heading this way – the fan worship of individuals over and above their team. Everton's fanbase is small and localised compared to many other Premiership clubs, and yet Rooney shirts can be spotted all over the country.

Recent rumours of Liverpudlian gangsters demanding a share of Rooney's fortune have been denied by the player's agent and club alike. What is certain is that his life is not going to be dull from now on.

Put your shirt on me...Rooney is getting to grips with fame

Herberger was largely successful. Germany became the dominant European power and played an attractive, modern version of the game. But that game was based heavily on formal coaching – and any game so based is likely to decay as the coaching system ossifies. As the 20th century closed, German soccer was showing clear signs of staleness. "There are no new players," lamented Franz Beckenbauer. His remark in 2000 that Germany was "10 years behind the world's best" was the brutal truth.

System-oriented Ajax

One of the countries that has overtaken Germany is Holland – thanks largely to the successful Ajax teams. But Ajax coaching – like that of Germany – is essentially system-oriented. That system was once explained to me, in rather frightening terms, by the club's under-19 coach, Gerard Van der Lem. Among other certainties, he told me that "if a player doesn't do what we discuss, we talk after the game. I tell him: 'I don't care if you scored four goals – you must do what you're supposed to do.'"

Nor was individuality one of Van der Lem's favourite words. "We don't look for the so-called stars," he said. "At Ajax everyone is the same. We don't want the Romarios."

> 'I don't care if you scored four goals – you must do what you're supposed to do'
>
> *Ajax under-19 coach Gerard Van der Lem*

I learned later about the Ajax booklet that informs 12-year-olds how they should behave and dress (no baseball caps!), and the intricate involvement of the club's dieticians and physiotherapists.

Such rigid systems are destined to run their course. Perhaps it was inevitable – it was certainly appropriate – that the arch priest of rigid systems, Louis Van Gaal, should preside over Holland's unthinkable failure to qualify for the 2002 World Cup.

Where the Dutch and the Germans are system-oriented, the Brazilians, Argentinians and the South Americans generally have traditionally put their trust in individual talent. Of course, that means less organisation. But the continual flow of flair players from Brazil and Argentina suggests they are doing something right.

The youngsters produced in recent years by Boca Juniors, River Plate and – this year – Santos have been of an exceptional quality. And of course many of them are now either in or on their way to Europe.

That is the economic effect. The South American clubs are chronically short of money. They need, as a matter of survival, to constantly sell their stars to Europe. Repeatedly selling popular players stretches fan loyalty to its limits. In 1999, when River Plate were rumoured to be getting ready to transfer Pablo Aimar and Javier Saviola, fans staged a protest at the Monumental stadium, with signs reading "Aimar and Saviola Are Not for Sale". By 2001 both players had been sold.

The official River Plate website assures fans that all is well: "New stars, such as Andres D'Alessandro, Damian Alvarez, Fernando Cavenaghi assure an encouraging future full of success – at least until they have to take opportunities with overseas clubs. For sure, they will be replaced by other young stars from the most successful youth division in the country, that of River Plate."

Quite possibly, the rapid turnover of players, opening up first-team places to youth players, does help in youth development. Even so, it is difficult to pin down just what it is that the Latins have and the Europeans don't. One suspects, of course, that it is something to do with the coaching. It seems likely that the Europeans have simply become too formal, too scientific in their approach.

A football dominated by tactics and systems, as is so much of the European game, is bound to seek players who will be, more than anything else, role players. And it will be the function of the academies to supply such players.

That is a danger of the academy system. That it will produce stereotyped players – good players, no doubt, technically sound, superbly fit – but limited in their ability to display the full richness of the sport. Too disciplined, if you like.

Attempts by pro clubs to identify and coach players as young as eight carry a distinct possibility of doing more harm than good. This is not a criticism of the coaches, or not necessarily a criticism. There is no reason whatever to doubt their sincerity and devotion. But they are part of a questionable system.

To assess a 12-year-old player only in terms of his potential as a future pro – and that is what, consciously or unconsciously, the academies must do – is hardly fair. Emphasis is bound to be placed on adult values, for example, size. Players seen as 'too small' or 'not strong enough' are likely to be rejected, or – something that may be as bad – bulked up by special diets and physical training routines. Or, it is rumoured, even given steroids.

Chaotic it may have been, but the old unruly sprawl of street soccer and independent youth clubs produced a rich variety of player personalities and styles. That diversity is what has gone missing from the modern game.

The European coaches who called for street soccer know perfectly well that the

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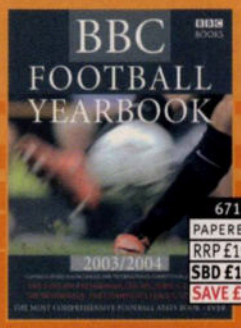

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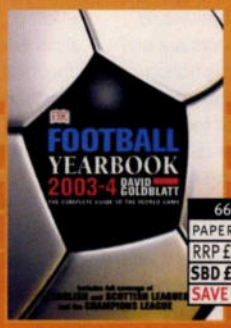

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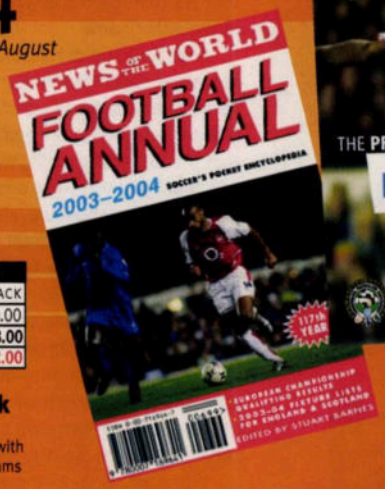

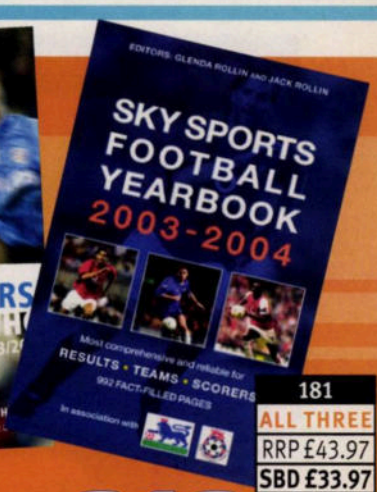

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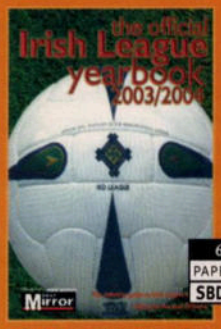

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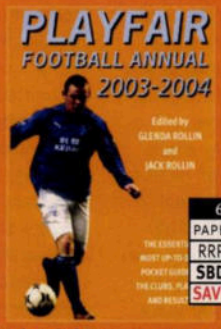

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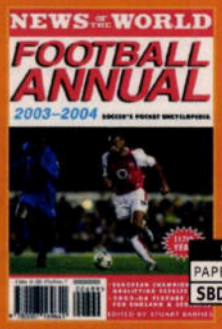

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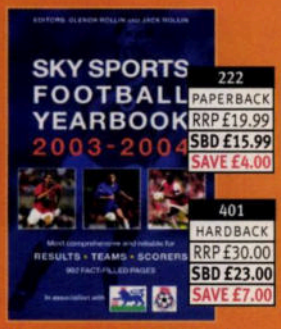

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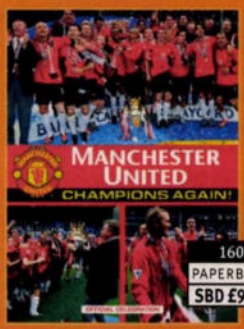

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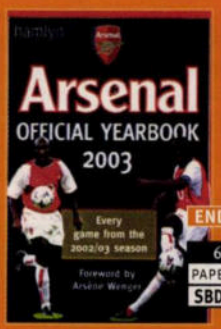

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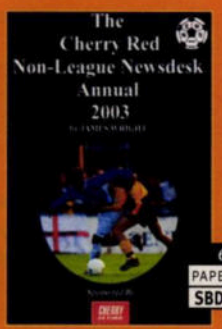

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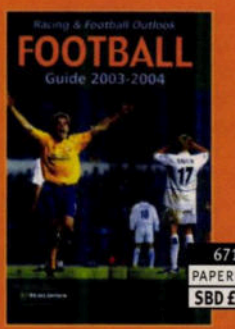

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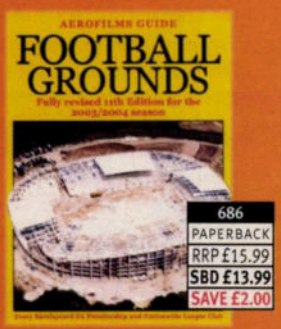

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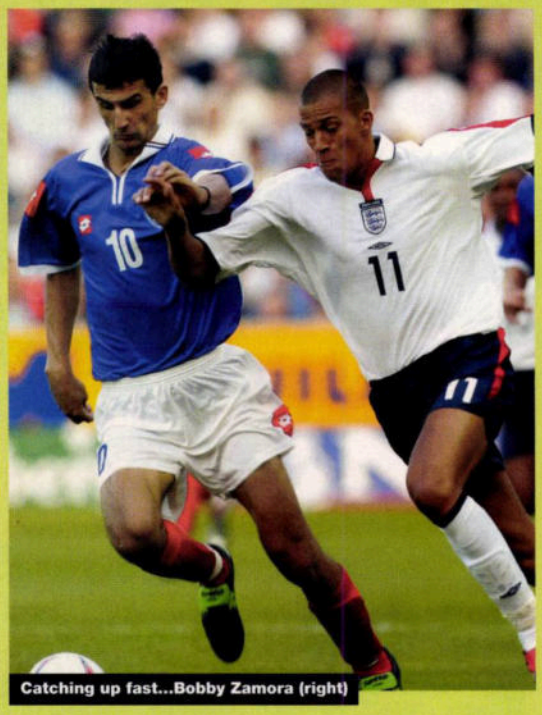
CASE STUDY BOBBY ZAMORA



Catching up fast...Bobby Zamora (right)

The one that got away

WHEN Brighton went back down to Division Two of the English Nationwide League, it seemed unthinkable that Bobby Zamora would stay for another season. And so it proved – Tottenham signed him for £2million in July.

A couple of seasons ago, when Brighton came up from that division, Zamora scored no fewer than 28 goals, so what has he got to prove? At 22, this adroit, well-built, free-scoring striker needs and deserves to catch up all those players whom he knew when they were boys together at West Ham.

He was there between the ages of 11 and 14, along with John Terry (Chelsea), JLloyd Samuel (Aston Villa), Paul Konchesky (Charlton) and the two who have successfully remained at Upton Park, Joe Cole and Michael Carrick. They all played for a Sunday team called Senrab, and those who left West Ham, says Zamora, did so because "we had a bit of a falling out; we just decided to go".

In retrospect, a costly affair for the Hammers. Zamora then was known to the others as 'Little Bobby', though now he is a well-built 5ft 11in. Indeed, Steve Coppell, his manager at Brighton, says that Zamora, according to X-rays of his legs, is still growing. Yet it was because he was small – a familiar football story – that Norwich jettisoned him as a 15-year-old.

So his tortuous trail to Brighton continued. Southend offered him a traineeship but he didn't stay long since it meant living at home. "I decided to go to Bristol Rovers because it was away from home," he says. "I wanted to see what's out there. I did my apprenticeship and did all right."

Rovers lent him to non-league Bath City, where he scored numerous goals, but when he returned, the way was blocked by the likes of Nathan Ellington, Jason Roberts and Jamie Cureton. So it was on again, more happily this time to Brighton, where he arrived just three days before the season began and started scoring.

"I won't say I'm fast," he admits, "I won't say I'm lightning or anything. It seems I've just got a knack of being in the right place at the right time."

Coppell says: "It's speed of thought more than anything. He has a normal pace and an extended pace, and that's when he really leaves people, when he gets into his stride. He just runs away from them. So many people say to me, can he play in the Premiership? I say yes – ultimately."

Brian Glanville

clock cannot be turned back. They are looking for what they call 'new structures' that will recreate the essential ingredients of the street game.

If we're going to reformulate street soccer we need to work out what was so special about it. Small-sided games are one attempt – based on the coaching notion that the essential part of street soccer was that the players got a lot of touches of the ball. Questionable. I have clear recollections of some street games that were anything but small-sided.

I believe that a much more crucial part of the street game was that it rarely, if ever, involved adults. It was by boys, of boys, and for boys. They ran it, they made up their own rules, they were their own referees, and they settled their own arguments. They played the game the way they wanted to.

When adults do all those things for you, when adults tell you where you've got to be, at what time, and what you must be wearing if you want to play, and what you should be doing on the field...something very fundamental has been altered.

Johan Cruyff, not surprisingly, shows greater awareness. His foundation plans to create playing areas in big cities where – one hopes – maximum freedom will be allowed for the kids simply to do their own thing, to make their own mistakes, to be themselves. But the areas will have to be safe, which already means adult supervision and takes away some of the defiant, rebellious fun of street soccer.

But that is where we are in 2003. Adult involvement in youth football is growing. Youth coaching is here to stay. Indeed, it's likely to become more and more formalised. The day can surely not be far away when FIFA or UEFA unveil a special licence for youth coaches.

Inappropriate appointments

The situation at the moment is clearly unsatisfactory; far too often top youth coaching positions are given to men without any experience in the field. The job is frequently seen merely as a stepping stone to a senior coaching position – leading to the absurdity that the more successful a youth coach is, the more likely he is to be moved up to the senior team.

And an occasional shudder is in order at some of the youth coaching appointees – for example, Norman Whiteside, Mauro Tassotti and Claudio "soccer is not for ballerinas" Gentile – former players whose physical approach to the game seems particularly inappropriate.

The hope is that a youth licence would make it clear that very little formal coaching should be done until the age of, say, 12. A watching brief is what's required up until that age – during which the coach should be doing most of the learning, not the player. Studying the player, learning something about his personal traits, letting those traits develop. Sadly, this may already be asking too much. Because if there is one thing that modern coaches – having invested time and money acquiring a licence – want to do, it is coach. To allow errors and 'bad habits' to go uncorrected will offend them, so the coaching will begin early.

Boys should be boys

Under such a system, it's more than likely that Diego Maradona would have been constantly nagged to develop his right foot, that Beckenbauer would have been chivvied into improving his left. What would that sort of early coaching have done to those players? It could hardly have improved them.

I am not making a case for sheer anarchy in youth coaching. Some shape, some structure is obviously required. But it should be based – certainly up to the age of 12 – on the requirement that boys are permitted to be boys, that they be allowed the freedom to develop first as boys. Later will come the instructing, the teaching, the training, the coaching – whatever it is.

Many years ago, I was complaining to Jock Stein about too much coaching too young. He leaned his formidable bulk towards me and, in a confidential whisper that could be heard across the room, told me: "It's not coaching, laddie...it's coaxing."

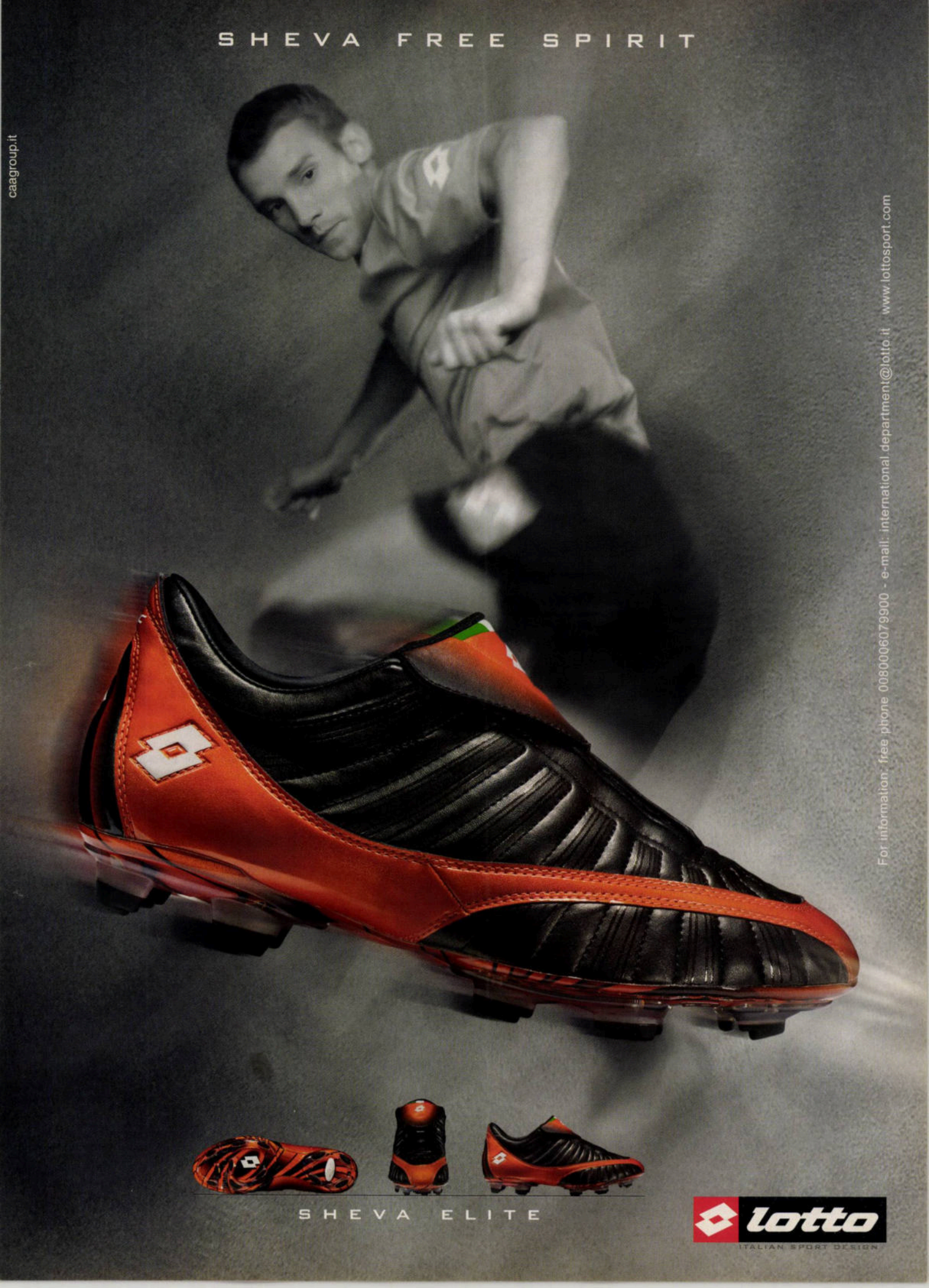
That's better. Coaxing – a word that suggests a patient, human process, that implies respect for the boys, and goes some way to relieving the adults from that awful, numbing responsibility of always being right, of always knowing best.

Coaxing seems to admit, right from the start, that youth football should be a boys' world that adults enter carefully. They should come not to turn it into a soulless mirror image of the adult game, but to enhance all that is best in the child's game.

There is a club that comes close to practising what I am getting at, that seems to me to develop players, and therefore teams, and a style that exude boyish exuberance. Not a pro club, not a rich club, not in a fashionable country. The Academia Tahuichi, from Santa Cruz, Bolivia. For over 20 years Tahuichi has been producing wonderful youth teams full of highly-skilled boys whose play radiates enjoyment and fun. And winning teams, at that.

At 18 the boys leave Tahuichi. I asked the club founder, the late Roly Aguilera, why he did not start his own pro club? He was not interested, because he knew it would change everything. "Then you have to produce players according to needs – the pro club wants a left-back, or they're looking for a leader, so you start to mould players instead of letting them grow," he said.

Somehow, Tahuichi has maintained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CASE STUDY ARGENTINA

Trouble beneath the surface

YOUTH development is a serious business in Argentina, where the country's two most popular clubs, Boca Juniors and River Plate, leave nothing to chance.

Both clubs hold trials for some 8,000 youngsters every year and the best join junior teams ranging in age from 10 to 18.

The boys train almost daily like professionals and play the same rivals as the seniors in divisional championships. At smaller clubs the system is similar, but they have less cash to spend, so the youngsters do not receive the same benefits.

Bernardo Griffa, head youth coach at Boca Juniors, says: "The boys need technique and many are surprised that we do circuit training in pairs in two-hour sessions – passing, receiving, heading and shooting. It comes down to explaining, trying out, correcting and repeating. Do the boys get bored? For fun they can have recreational games, but this is competitive training.

"But tactics alone are not enough. He must have speed physically and mentally as spaces are reduced these days. He must have discipline, good conduct and be able to comply with set tactics. He needs temperament to get the ball and create goal chances, and personality to make the necessary move at the right moment. And one must always teach them to play to win, which does not mean obliging them to win. Their parents often do that and exert pressure which is one big mistake.

"Another big mistake is that players are now rushed into first teams too soon and too often. You can't expect an 18 or 19-year-old to play like a 23 or 24-year-old. To be successful he needs experienced players around him to be successful and that is now often not the case."

On the surface the system works well, but very young players are often made to sign up with an agent – often a club official who either works on his own or is connected with an agent. They pay the boy's father or guardian a modest sum, often gladly received by a poor family, for his signature. If the boy (or father) refuses, he may not get a place in the team. The 'agent' then hopes for a big profit on his modest outlay if he can arrange a transfer.

At Boca, a firm called ACE was founded by a former club official, Lucio Bernasconi, who had been in charge of amateur football, to arrange the placing abroad of promising youngsters. This was done through a former Argentina coach, Antonio D'Accorso. When ACE began to be investigated, Boca announced the company had been dismantled. But there are some doubts. The club's 2001-02 balance sheet shows a payment of £130,000 to ACE.

Undernourishment is also a problem in a country in which 60 per cent of the population is now poor and half of those live below the breadline.

Of around 5.7 million boys under 14 in the country, four million come from poor homes and are not properly nourished, while over half the latter category are dangerously undernourished. And it is from this poor category that boys mostly come to play in the junior divisions of professional clubs, hoping to make the grade and escape from their poverty.

Diego Maradona was one of those young boys in the 1960s. His first coach, Francisco Cornejo, used to pick him up from his home in his car for training and matches. Today, many promising youngsters are lost to the game because they cannot afford the fare to come to training.

But clubs today lament that many of these not properly nourished youngsters cannot stand up to the required training, get tired easily and even faint. Also, this lack of nourishment

Packed for the challenge...the young Diego Maradona

stunts their growth and makes them more prone to injuries. Already the problem is apparent in the national Under-17 squad. FA junior coach Hugo Tocalli says: "I found many boys did not have enough strength to kick the ball hard and they get tired in training. In these cases, we examine them and arrange for their families to get social assistance. We also give them a meal when they arrive for training because often they have not eaten anything. We also give them a sandwich and fruit when they leave."

These are the chosen few who get support from the FA. But this help may be too late. Growing up undernourished is not easy to correct once they are teenagers.

Professional clubs have an average of 200 to 250 youths playing in their junior divisions and while some clubs do give them something to eat when they come for training, others cannot afford it.

At Racing Club, junior team doctor Walter Mira says: "We have a lot of boys who get only one meal a day. That is very serious, because lack of proper nourishment makes them prone to more injuries and often forces them to abandon soccer by the time they are 16. But the matter of feeding them is complicated. When we give them food to take home, we find they share it with the whole family, or sell it to be able to take their girlfriend out."

At provincial club Talleres Cordoba, the junior division co-ordinator says: "We find many boys get tired quickly and they will not immediately tell you that they haven't got enough to eat at home. We give about 15 to 20 of the worst cases something to eat after training, but that does not really fix the problem and we cannot afford to do more."

Eric Weil

Aguilera's ideals. I have never seen a Tahuichi game – from the under-12s on up – that was not full of joyful, skilful soccer. Of course, it will be argued that Tahuichi players don't make it in the pro world. Actually, that's not true; there are quite a few ex-Tahuichis playing in leagues around the world.

But more importantly, the criticism misses the point. Which is that Tahuichi has shown that the boyish elements so necessary to the flair player can be encouraged within a development system. There is plenty of discipline at the club, but it is not heavy-handed.

Yes, I'm perfectly aware that most of the Bolivian youngsters are from poor families, that they have fewer opportunities and distractions than European boys. But most of Tahuichi's raw material is not promising – many of the boys arrive malnourished, many need dental treatment. Nonetheless, the quality of their football is to marvel at. It would be nice to think that some of the European youth development experts might like to study what goes on at Tahuichi. I'm not aware that any have.

The Academia Tahuichi (even they feel obliged to use the word academy) is always short of money. Its success is a strong reminder that youth development is not all, probably not even mostly, about cash. The Tahuichi playing fields, on the outskirts of Santa Cruz, were for years notoriously horrible. The kids called the area *la luna* (the moon) because it was pot-holed, bumpy and anything but grassy.

Dirt fields, improved control

But is it possible that those awful fields are actually a plus? That they help, in the same way that the coarseness of street soccer helped? Ball control may well be slicker and quicker if you've learned to instantly tame a ball that is likely to jump in any direction. Time for the smooth surfaces later.

As Tahuichi has progressed, better fields have been laid down. But three dirt fields have been deliberately left in place. "We keep them as a reminder of our roots," says Aguilera's son Rolito, now in charge at Tahuichi. "All the little kids start on those fields."

I take it that no well-heeled European academy would dream of deliberately installing a bumpy dirt field. I suspect that even if their coaches thought it was a good idea, the lawyers would step in and oppose it over possibilities of injuries and lawsuits.

That is just one of the realities of being an academy. Like the necessity of educational instruction, it is an externally imposed restriction.

Another of these limiting factors, an absolutely key one, is the unpredictability of the growing-up process. That has been

a constant theme of this article. Some youth schemes work well for a while, then fade away. Most schemes produce a few good, some bad, and a lot of ordinary players. About what you would expect, with or without academies.

Given this inability to peer into the future, the safest path to success lies in numbers. Bring in as many boys as you can, the more the merrier.

Before Tahuichi takes on players, it will have studied thousands and thousands in local Santa Cruz youth games. But in England, for instance, things are more competitive. The top academies have been accused of taking in more players than they can handle. If they don't take the kids, another club will.

The big clubs are the worst offenders because they have the biggest budgets. The situation obviously does not work to the boys' advantage. Alex Smith, former Scotland Under-21 manager, recently had a provocative thought.

> 'The Academia Tahuichi's success is a strong reminder youth development is not all about cash'

Rangers and Celtic, he pointed out, logically get the pick of the best youngsters. But most of those kids then suffer "arrested development" because of the difficulty of breaking into the first team.

He questioned whether Rangers or Celtic should even have academies. Let the smaller clubs do the developing. The Old Firm can then buy the best.

It is highly unlikely that big clubs who spend millions on their academies will take that seriously. But maybe they should. Very few academies are efficient at producing players for their own club. Most of their products are sold. That trade in young players then becomes a justification for the academies. They may not turn out too many superstars, but they do turn a profit.

I can see no football justification for that – only a financial one. If it were a fact that richer clubs give better training, OK. But is there any evidence of that? Having the smaller clubs in charge of player development – and therefore allowing them to profit from their efforts – sounds like a move that would strengthen the overall game.

But such an idea immediately runs into another external restriction, a side-effect of the Bosman ruling. Guus Hiddink tells us that, in Holland, clubs are already neglecting youth work because, under Bosman, they are no longer guaranteed transfer fees when they sell young players.

Anyway, we do not know enough

CASE STUDY ASEC ABIDJAN & BEVEREN

Guillou's galaxy

THE 1998 African Super Cup first confirmed Jean-Marc Guillou was doing something special in the Ivory Coast.

Guillou, a former French international, had been beavering away at the head of an Abidjan football academy for some years. When he was appointed to coach Ivorian champions ASEC Abidjan, to whom his centre was linked, Guillou decided to give his young charges a baptism of fire. ASEC were the African Champions League holders, and would face Esperance, the Tunisian side that had recently won the African Cup-winners Cup.

Rather than keep faith with his championship-winning veterans, Guillou turned to his untried youth team players, thenceforth known simply as the Academicians.

"It was my one moment of doubt," Guillou recalls. "On the morning of the game I thought to myself, am I doing the right thing?"

He was. The Academicians, average age just 17, swept aside a vastly more experienced Esperance side 3-1 in a brilliant display of attacking football.

Since then, many have graduated to promising careers in the cut-throat world of European professional football. Anderlecht's Aruna Dindane was voted the second-best player in Belgium in 2002-03; Kolo Toure has become a valuable role player at Arsenal; and a round dozen have signed with Belgian club Beveren, which is now part-owned by Guillou.

Many more will no doubt follow: the Ivory Coast academy is being followed by one in Madagascar, and there are plans for one in North Africa too.

So what makes Guillou's original centre, now definitively divorced from ASEC following a bitter row, so special?

"Guillou is like a father to us," claims Venance 'Zezeto' Zeze, who scored twice in that Super Cup game. "He has always been there for us, and whenever we have problems we turn to him. "I owe everything to him," concurs Toure.

It is not just Guillou's paternal qualities that have helped his players; he is a teacher too. "Our philosophy is that it is just as important to educate a man as to train a footballer," Guillou says. "I am as proud of who my players are as people as of what they achieve on the pitch."

Unlike the majority of football schools in Africa, Academicians receive a full education alongside their footballing lessons.

The Academy Jean-Marc Guillou, as it is now known, has pioneered some radical on-pitch tactics too. The youngsters play barefoot for the first few years, which encourages better touch and keeps costs low. Players are not allowed to hoof the ball out of defence, and must play constructive, attacking football at all times.

Academicians are also selected from rigorous trials, which include the weighing and measuring of all applicants to avoid the age fraud that is prevalent in African football.

"We know how much a 13-year-old boy in Abidjan should weigh," Guillou explains, "and everyone who goes beyond these measurements is automatically rejected."

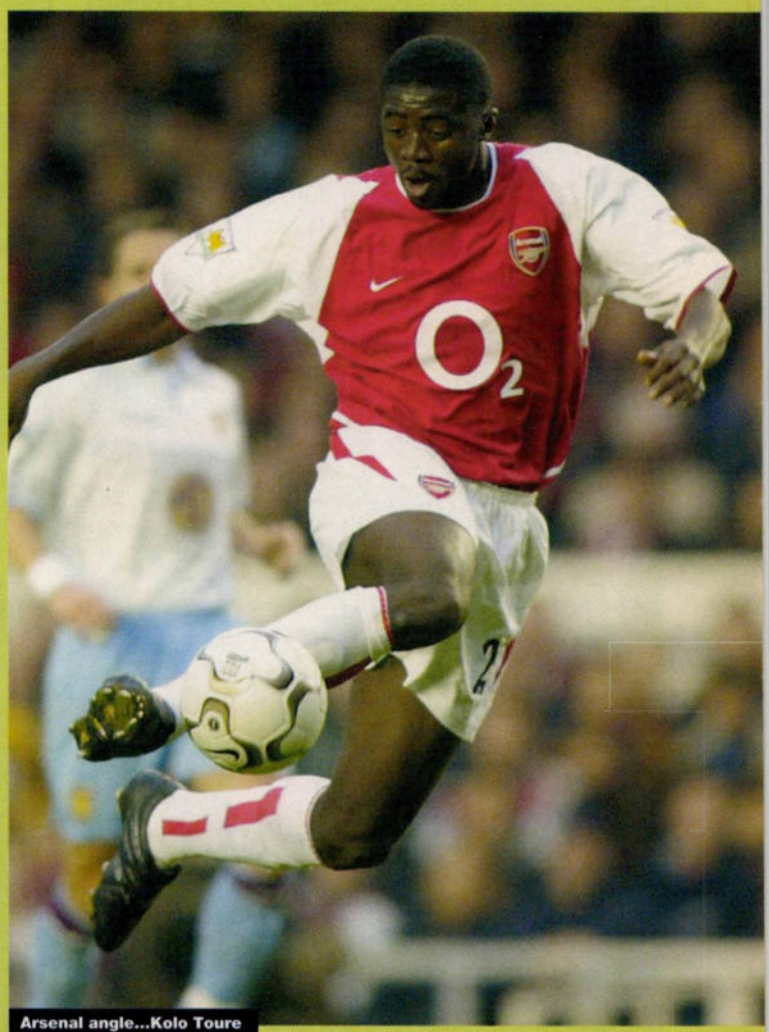
Consequently, any player who has gone through the Academy is the age he says he is, although this can be a handicap as well as an advantage.

"European clubs often took other players who seemed to be in advance of ours physically," Guillou complains. "That is why I decided to buy into Beveren, to bring my players to Europe."

The Belgian club now regularly field as many as eight Ivorians in their starting XI, and despite the young age of the players the club finished 2002-03 in a comfortable mid-table position.

More Academicians will join Beveren this summer. "We have the best academy in the world," Guillou concludes. "No academy anywhere turns out such a high percentage of professional players as we do. And there are many more to come."

James Copnall



Arsenal angle...Kolo Toure

Kickabout...Belfast children play under forbidding sectarian imagery

about what expectations do to a boy's game. It seems quite possible that a youngster at Celtic or Rangers, knowing that his chances of making the first team are slender, would develop a less enthusiastic mentality than kids at Boca or River, clubs that repeatedly call up youngsters to replace stars who have been sold to Europe. Maybe – but this is another area where our knowledge is flimsy.

One of the most repeated phrases of modern football is that a team is 'well-organised'. It is always meant as a compliment, even though experience strongly suggests that, in practice, it is almost a synonym for boring. Flair, excitement and spontaneity are sacrificed before the great god of efficiency.

The concept has carried over to youth development, which is in the process of becoming well-organised. Youth football, which ought to be brimming with flair, is now asked to move to a different rhythm, that of the increasingly stultified adult game.

Modern times demand that youth football be taken seriously. How can it be otherwise? There is a lot of money at stake now. So the kids are being closely wedded to the pro game. The boys' game is being loaded with pro coaching, pro attitudes, pro mentality, pro tactics, etc. But when top European youth directors lament the death of street soccer it is clear that something is awry with the academy approach.

Youth football is being deprived of its own values, and becoming adult soccer played by boys. The spontaneity and individuality that used to characterise street soccer are casualties of the new order. Where strong football personalities, real originals, used to emerge, the academies are more likely to produce role-players.

> 'Youth football, which should be brimming with flair, is now asked to move to a stultified rhythm'

Possibly that is the unavoidable destiny of football in a rapidly-changing world, where the traditional values in so many activities are being overthrown. But one would hate to see the spirit of street soccer – chaotic, yes, but rich in all the wonderful surprises of this marvellous sport – die without a fight.

CASE STUDY **FREDDY ADU**

Freddy fever

Jason La Canfora on America's teenage phenomenon

APART from the £650,000 contract from Nike, the constant overtures from football clubs and media worldwide, and the pressure of being billed as the future of American soccer at the tender age of 14, Freddy Adu is a typical teenager.

He enjoys playing video games, joking around with his mates and feasting on his mother's cooking, although occasionally Adu allows himself to ponder whether he would look better in the kit of Manchester United or Real Madrid. In his case, such thoughts are no lark.

Adu, who was born in Ghana and settled near Washington DC in 1997 after his family won an immigration lottery, received a lucrative multi-year contract offer from Internazionale before his 12th birthday. His mother rejected it to preserve a relatively routine childhood for her son.

The player's agent, Richard Motzkin, is inundated with requests from clubs, companies and journalists. "I'll admit that even I am surprised by the amount of calls that come through," he says, while luminaries such as Sir Alex Ferguson have been heard to utter the starlet's name in public.

Undoubtedly, Freddy Fever has reached fever pitch.

After Adu represents the United States in the World Under-17 Championship later this month – he became an American citizen earlier this year – the long-awaited decision about which European club to join could be forthcoming.

Scouts have tracked the gifted striker since he dominated an elite youth tournament in Italy at the age of 10. The inescapable attention of the world's biggest clubs, international corporations and a legion of football supporters desperate for a saviour to boost the game's profile in America has become a normal part of life for the youngster.

"It is a lot to bear," Adu conceded after a recent training session with DC United of MLS, "but if you play well I guess all this stuff is just going to keep happening. You can't really do anything about it, and I try to think of it as a reward for how hard you've been training and how much better you've become. I kind of enjoy it, but on the other hand I don't want to get too caught up in it and get a big head about it."

Adu, who exudes maturity well beyond his years, could be forgiven for succumbing to the hype; the glare of fame is almost impossible to ignore.

Signing autographs in Guatemala and South Korea and being compared to Pele and Maradona in the foreign press tends to warp a young man's sensibilities. But Adu is beloved by his team-mates and coaches, receives no preferential treatment and has endeared himself to grizzled World Cup stars such as Hristo Stoichkov during sporadic practices with DC United.

"Freddy is the real deal, there's no ifs, ands or buts about it," says DC coach Ray Hudson, who believes Adu could play for any team in MLS right now. "He's 100 per cent the business. He's a delight. The boys all love him.

"Apart from all the technical qualities he has and the burgeoning talent, he's such a great kid, but a competitor to boot. He brings it in the real manner in which a professional should. He's so far ahead of the learning curve that there's little that can be faulted in him, and that's pretty scary. Where is the fault? If there isn't one and if he stays on the tracks, we are likely to see something very, very special."

Adu's blend of speed, savvy and natural ability – he slaloms effortlessly through multiple defenders, can unleash a potent bicycle-kick from outside the 18-yard box and has the creative insight to play in midfield if need be – made him irresistible to Nike. His beaming smile, unembellished charm and ease in front of a television camera will not hurt Adu's marketability either.

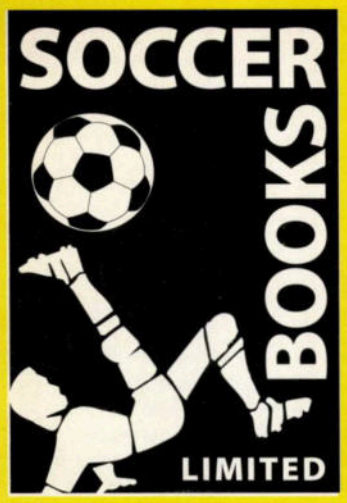
"It is exceptional to have such a well-rounded individual at that age, and we feel fortunate about that," said Celeste Alleyne of Nike. "But what primarily attracted us to Freddy is his phenomenal on-the-field ability and talent."

Nike's hope is that Adu becomes the first American footballer to make an indelible mark internationally. Of course, injuries, poor guidance and numerous distractions (puberty-related or otherwise) could derail a once-promising career. Adu has already proven so much so soon, yet remains a work in progress.

"There is no doubt that he may be the most talented player that we've ever come across in this country," said US Under-20 coach Thomas Rongen.

"But saying that, there are a lot of very talented players in the world that eventually don't end up where everybody thought they would. When I came through the Ajax youth system I played with some unbelievably gifted players who at 14 were mentioned in the same breath as Johan Cruyff. What happened? They went into total obscurity at 18 or 19. So only time will tell."

Taking it easy...Freddy Adu knows he has to keep his feet firmly on the ground despite all the hype



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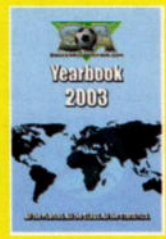

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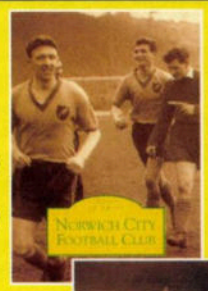

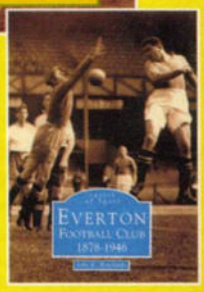

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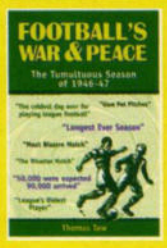

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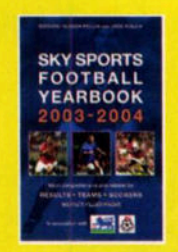

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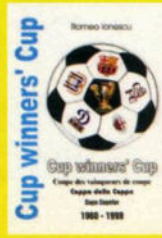

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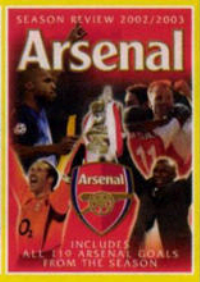

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Keir Radnedge
COMMENTARY

Opportunity knocked for Oceania

FOOTBALL'S attempt to make up ground on rugby in Australia and New Zealand lies in tatters after the disgraceful U-turn on Oceania's 'guaranteed' place at the World Cup finals.

No wonder Tonga's Ahongalu Fusimalohi – who cast the lone protest vote – and confederation non-voting president, Basil Scarsella of Australia, walked out in protest at the FIFA executive's decision in Paris.

The dispute about the number of teams at the finals in Germany in 2006 and in Africa in 2010 has been complex. Simply, Oceania were victims of a revolt by the South Americans, who pulled all the political levers available to avert the loss of a play-off route to the finals.

Expanding the finals to 36 teams was rejected as unworkable so the ultimate price of appeasing CONMEBOL was reducing Oceania back to a play-off option.

So much for past favours. It was a huge personal blow for Scarsella, who had stood up for Sepp Blatter in the financial row that threatened to tear FIFA apart at last year's Seoul Congress.

Votes in favour of South America and against Oceania were cast by all Europe's members, including Scotland's David Will and Germany's Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder.

Will represents the four home associations, who might have been thought to have had particular sympathies for Australia and New Zealand.

As for DFB boss Mayer-Vorfelder, Germany would not be staging the 2006 finals had it not been for the controversial abstention of New Zealand's Charlie Dempsey from the executive meeting in July 2000 that had narrowly backed their bid against South Africa.

Scarsella said: "I don't think this was a moral, ethical or even commercial decision. It was simply a piece of political opportunism which does no favours either to FIFA or the development of the game.

"Blatter used the excuse of the present financial and administrative problems of Soccer Australia, and also New Zealand's poor performance at the Confederations Cup [they lost all three matches]. But that was just grasping at short-term straws to justify a long-term decision. The decision is a disaster for Oceania football."

Walkout...Basil Scarsella

A single nation from each of Oceania and South America will now be joined in the qualifying play-offs by similar 'lucky losers' from Asia and Central/North America. Blatter, in a derisory appeasing gesture, suggested a play-off mini-league might be staged in Australia.

Australia and New Zealand might even be offered joint hosting rights to the World Club Championship in 2005. Wow!

Recession bites at the FA

The recession is starting to bite at international level. The FA's new four-year TV deal for England home games and FA Cup is worth only £300 million from the BBC (largely) and Sky. That represents an averaged-out fall in value of £40m per season. Significant stuff for an association encumbered with high-cost projects such as Wembley.

Celebrations: the bare facts

Players are now forbidden worldwide from removing their shirts to celebrate a goal "in the interests of maintaining discipline and order on the field of play". And to spare fans the sight of those unutterably tacky vest messages.

Sugar daddies not so sweet

Football's 'sugar daddies' ain't what they used to be. Blackburn's Jack Walker sold the family steel business and spent his loose change on his favourite toy. But predators such as Roman Abramovich at Chelsea are a different case altogether. Public company structures make it far easier for one man with deep corporate pockets to buy control of a club.

They also make it easier to collapse a club, legally.

Fans beware.

Speaking out...Moscow Spartak's Ibra Kebe (left) has faced abuse

Anti-racists should look East

RACISM within football, among fans and even sometimes with the careless or brainless acquiescence of officialdom, is most usually revealed in all its ugliness at internationals between clubs or countries.

But it is not enough to fight racism at the high profile of European Championship or Champions League or UEFA Cup. Federations and leagues need to do much more because this is where the root of the cancer is to be detected.

Racist tension has erupted in England, Italy, Holland and Germany with fans and players as targets. But at least the problem has been out in the comparative open. A greater problem is the much more secretive racism within Eastern Europe, undetected for years behind the communist facade, as events in old east Germany and, more recently, Slovakia have shown.

Most players, to avoid attracting even more trouble, have stayed silent. All the more remarkable then to hear Moscow Spartak's Senegalese defender Ibra Kebe speak out about institutionalised racism within the Russian game.

He said: "When we lose a match the management blame only us, the foreigners. They also mistreat us in human terms. Although Spartak try out many foreign players I was warned they don't like us here. [Cameroonian] Jerry Tchuisse [who later joined Chernomorets Novorossiisk] told me I would have problems.

"Even Spartak fans have thrown bananas and other fruit at black players during games. They also verbally abuse us.

"I went with Tchuisse, Essien Flo and Samuel Ogunsania to the Spartak management to complain. We wanted a face-to-face meeting with Oleg Romantsev, who was then the manager, but he wouldn't even listen to us."

Kebe has also said Spartak are late paying wages and have not paid him when he has been away on national team duty.

Director Alexander Shikunov snapped: "We have met all our contractual obligations to him."

But have they met all their human ones?

GOLD CUP

Mexico grind it out

Lavolpe's men triumphed through defensive strength not attacking prowess, writes Paul Gardner

MEXICO are the 2003 Gold Cup winners, the CONCACAF champions, but how they struggled to come out on top. Goalscoring was the problem. Nine goals scored in five games doesn't sound too bad, until you find out that over half of those goals came in the 5-0 quarter-final drubbing of Jamaica.

Struck Gold...Mexico captain Pavel Pardo raises the trophy

GOLD CUP

But Ricardo Lavolpe, Mexico's Argentina-born coach, had so tightened things up at the other end of the field that the team gave away no goals at all. Strong defence, skilful but non-penetrating midfield, indecisive attack – that was the Mexican story.

Mexico had much the better of the Final, played against the Brazilian Under-23 'guest' team before a crowd of 80,000 in Mexico City's Azteca stadium. But it wasn't until seven minutes into extra-time that substitute Daniel Osorno's fine individual golden goal broke the stalemate.

Lavolpe saves his skin

The victory will no doubt preserve Lavolpe's job – the press had been panning his team as 'boring', while national hero and sworn Lavolpe enemy Hugo Sanchez predicted that Lavolpe's job with the national team "will, like a bad marriage, end in divorce".

Maybe something like that was on the cards for Canada's German coach, Holger Osieck. After pulling off the upset of the first round of group matches with a 1-0 win over Costa Rica, the Canadians put in a truly abysmal performance against Cuba. The Cubans' 2-0 win was their first ever in the Gold Cup.

"It was just awful," admitted Osieck, referring repeatedly to his team as "they", rather than the glowing "we" he had used after the Costa Rica victory. His captain, Jason De Vos, bitingly remarked: "We have to re-examine the way we play football in Canada because this is just not working."

The defeat left Canada hoping that Costa Rica would beat Cuba by four goals. The final 3-0 scoreline eliminated Canada and left Osieck decrying an anti-Canada plot: "I didn't have any hope [of a fourth goal]; I knew it was a non-attacking pact between the two teams."

For the rest of the first round the results pretty much followed the natural order of soccer strength. Guest teams Colombia and Brazil plus CONCACAF powers Mexico, United States and Costa Rica advanced, along with Jamaica, El Salvador and the surprising Cuba.

Cuba's continued presence posed a possible problem; should they beat the USA, they would travel to Miami for their semi-final, which might create a security problem. Chuck Blazer, CONCACAF's general secretary, issued a soothing statement: "Naturally, in view of the known feelings of the Cuban community in Miami towards the government of their homeland, we shall be prepared to take additional precautions."

No need for alarm. Up in Foxboro, the USA took care of Cuba to the tune of 5-0, with Landon Donovan getting four of the goals.

In Miami Colombia went out tamely, losing 2-0 to Brazil. Colombia coach Francisco Maturana later remarked that the poor performance was caused by "a weak defence and a group of dumb players".

'Mexico had much the better of the Final, against the Brazilian Under-23 team. But it wasn't until seven minutes into extra-time that substitute Daniel Osorno broke the stalemate'

The other two quarter-finals were routs – Costa Rica 5-2 over El Salvador, Mexico 5-0 over Jamaica.

In the semi-finals, Mexico took on Costa Rica at the Azteca and found their scoring difficulties eased by a woeful performance from Ricardo Gonzalez in the Costa Rican goal. In the 19th minute he turned Rafael Marquez's 45-yard high ball into his own net, and nine minutes later failed to hold a free-kick from Pavel Pardo, allowing Jared Borgetti a simple tap in. The two goals were all that Mexico needed.

Goal frenzy...USA's Landon Donovan hit four v Cuba

Steve Sampson, Costa Rica's American coach, said nothing about his keeper's gaffes, limiting himself to: "We played good soccer, with excellent rhythm, but soccer is decided on goals, and Mexico made them."

In the other semi-final, the USA found the young Brazilians too much of a handful. Yet, although Brazil dominated for long periods, the USA precariously held on to a 1-0 lead, thanks to defender Carlos Bocanegra's headed goal, until Kaka levelled the score in the 89th minute. "We had 'em," rued goalkeeper Kasey Keller, but Donovan added the sober truth that "you can't give up goals with two minutes to go".

Arena lets rip

The USA's Bruce Arena (who now shuns the title 'coach', preferring to be called technical director) finally let rip with his frustrations at the timing and squad-restrictions of the Gold Cup, and the travelling involved. "Thank God we don't have to go to Mexico City and play at altitude on Sunday – that would have been a farce," he said.

Instead, the USA stayed in Miami while Costa Rica did the travelling from Mexico for the third-place game. Sampson made the obvious change, in goal, where Alvaro Mesen took over from the unfortunate Gonzalez, and the Ticos were leading 2-1 at half-time. But the travelling took its toll; Costa Rica wilted, the USA got two splendid goals, from Earnie Stewart and Bobby Convey, to take the third-place medal.

The tournament's Most Valuable Player award went to Mexico's speedy dribbler Jesus Arellano. Mexico's Oswaldo Sanchez took the goalkeeper trophy. The scoring title was shared by the USA's Landon Donovan and Costa Rica's Walter Centeno, with four goals each. The Fair Play trophy went to the USA.

Target man...Cuba's Lester More celebrates one of his two goals against Canada

Group A

July 13 - Mexico City
Mexico 1 (Borgetti 70)
Brazil 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 60,000. **Ref:** Sibrian (ES)
Mexico: O Sanchez - Carmona, Salazar, Osorio, Briseno, Pardo, Valdez, Arellano (Juan P Rodriguez 67), R Garcia (Osorno 67), Zepeda (L Perez 46), Borgetti.
Brazil: Gomes - Maicon, Luisao, Alex Costa, Adriano Claro, Julio Baptista (Nadson 82), Paulo Almeida, Diego (Nilmar 73), Kaka, Robinho, Ewerthon (Thiago Motta 53).

July 15 - Mexico City
Brazil 2 (Maicon 16, Diego 84)
Honduras 1 (Leon pen 90)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Navarro (Can)
Brazil: Gomes - Maicon, Luisao, Alex Costa, Adriano Claro, Paulo Almeida, Julio Baptista, Kaka, Diego, Robinho (Thiago Motta 55), Ewerthon (Carlos Alberto 72).
Honduras: Coello - M Palacios, Rosales, Vallecillo, Javier Martinez, Bonilla (E Martinez 75), Guifarro, Hernandez, Leon, D Suazo (Jairo Martinez 71), Velasquez (Turcios 46).

July 17 - Mexico City
Honduras 0
Mexico 0
Ref: Nery (ES)
Honduras: Coello - Alvarez, M Palacios, Vallecillo, Medina, Rosales, Turcios (Bonilla 80), Guifarro, Velasquez (D Suazo 60), Leon (E Martinez 90), Hernandez.
Mexico: O Sanchez - Carmona, Osorio, Salazar, Briseno, Pardo, R Garcia (Juan P Rodriguez 75), Zepeda (Osorno 46), Valdez, Arellano (L Perez 58), Borgetti.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mexico	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
Brazil	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
Honduras	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

Group B

July 13 - Miami
Jamaica 0
Colombia 1 (Patino 42)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,423. **Ref:** Stott (USA)
Jamaica: Ricketts - M Johnson (Taylor 82), J Lawrence, A Williams, Byfield (Lowe 60), Whitmore, Marshall, Gardner, Langley (Daley 60), Ziadie, C Davis.
Colombia: Mondragon - Vallejo, Mera, Perea, Patino (Virviescas 46), Lozano (Velasquez 77), Hernandez, Molina, Bustos (Montoya 46), J Restrepo, J Castillo.

July 15 - Miami
Guatemala 0
Jamaica 2 (Lowe 30, A Williams pen 72)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,323. **Ref:** Pineda (Hnd)
Guatemala: E Estrada - M Gonzalez, Monterroso, Thompson (Aguirre 46), Acevedo, Garcia (Antonio 61), Martinez (Plata 54), Machon, Romero, Valencia, Ruiz.
Jamaica: Ricketts - M Johnson, J Lawrence, A Williams, Byfield (Stewart 59), Whitmore, Marshall (McDonald 46), Gardner, Ziadie, C Davis (Daley 68), Lowe. *Sent off: Lowe 51min.*

July 17 - Miami
Colombia 1 (Molina 79)
Guatemala 1 (Ruiz pen 21)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 13,000. **Ref:** Porras (CR)
Colombia: Mondragon - Vallejo (Velasquez 46), Mera, Perea, Bustos, Patino, Lozano (Virviescas 46), J Restrepo, Hernandez, Molina, J Castillo (Vasquez 46).
Guatemala: E Estrada - Martinez, Valencia, M Gonzalez, Monterroso, Thompson (Morales 75), Romero (Garcia 56), Machon, Ruiz, Plata (Rodriguez 40), Acevedo.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Colombia	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Jamaica	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Guatemala	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

Group C

July 12 - Foxboro
United States 2 (Lewis 28, McBride 76)
El Salvador 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 33,652. **Ref:** Ramos (Mex)
USA: Keller - Vanney, Bocanegra, Califf, Hejduk, Mastroeni, Reyna (Mathis 60), Lewis (Convey 84), Stewart (Ralston 71), Donovan, McBride.
El Salvador: Gomez - V Velasquez, Marvin Gonzalez (J Castro 90), Pacheco, Murgas, Torres Cabrera, Moran, Torres Alegria (Sanchez 44), Corrales, Campos (Cabrera 74), D Mejia.

July 14 - Foxboro
Martinique 0
United States 2 (McBride 39, 43)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 8,780. **Ref:** Moreno (Pan)
Martinique: Heurlie - Vaton, Suedile, Dicanot, Lavril, Padoly (Germany 75), Girier-Dufournier, Coridon, Duragrin, J Goron (Reyal 82), Percin (Michaud 67). *Sent off: Girier-Dufournier 89min.*
USA: Keller - Hejduk, Bocanegra, Gibbs, Convey, Mulrooney, Reyna (Stewart 46), Ralston, Lewis (Mastroeni 65), Donovan, McBride (Vanney 86).

July 16 - Foxboro
El Salvador 1 (Marvin Gonzalez 76)
Martinique 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,361. **Ref:** Batres (Gtm)
El Salvador: Gomez - Torres Cabrera, Marvin Gonzalez, J Castro (Torres Alegria 59), V Velasquez, Sanchez, Cabrera (Murgas 46), Campos (Ochoa 74), Corrales, Pacheco, Moran.
Martinique: Heurlie - Vaton, Percin, Dicanot, J Goron (Reyal 63), Duragrin, Suedile, Michaud (Germany 64), Padoly, Lavril, Coridon.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
United States	2	2	0	0	4	0	6
El Salvador	2	1	0	1	1	2	3
Martinique	2	0	0	2	0	3	0

Group D

July 12 - Foxboro
Costa Rica 0
Canada 1 (Stalteri 59)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 33,652. **Ref:** Piper (T&T)
Costa Rica: R Gonzalez - Marin, A Castro, G Martinez, Lopez, R Fonseca, Centeno (Bryce 76), L Gonzalez (C Castro 72), Vallejos, Wright, W Parks (Scott 62).
Canada: Hirschfeld - Fenwick, Hastings, De Vos, Bent (Hutchinson 69), Stalteri, Imhof, McKenna (Corazzin 85), Nash (Canizalez 63), Dasovic, Pozniak.

July 14 - Foxboro
Canada 0
Cuba 2 (More 15, 46)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 8,780. **Ref:** Prendergast (Jam)
Canada: Hirschfeld - Fenwick, Hastings (Corazzin 78), De Vos, Stalteri, Imhof, McKenna, Nash (Hutchinson 83), Dasovic, Canizalez (Hume 46), Pozniak.
Cuba: Molina - Marquez, Pedro, Cruzata, L Perez, Ramirez, More, Galindo (Dalcourt 82), Colome (Cervantes 46), Fernandez (Rivero 58), Adriani.

July 16 - Foxboro
Cuba 0
Costa Rica 3 (Centeno 45, Bryce 72, Scott 77)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,361. **Ref:** Archundia (Mex)
Cuba: Molina - Marquez, Pedro, Cruzata, L Perez, Ramirez, More (Estrada 63), Galindo (Dalcourt 90), Fernandez, Adriani, Cervantes (Morales 75).
Costa Rica: R Gonzalez - Marin, A Castro, G Martinez, Lopez (Bryce 71), R Fonseca (Scott 62), M Solis, Centeno, Wright, W Parks, C Castro (L Gonzalez 79).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Costa Rica	2	1	0	1	3	1	3
Cuba	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Canada	2	1	0	1	1	2	3

Top two from each group qualified for quarter-finals

Quarter-finals

July 19 - Foxboro
United States 5 (Donovan 22, 25, 55, 76, Ralston 42)
Cuba 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 15,627. **Ref:** Prendergast (Jam)
USA: Keller - Hejduk, Califf, Gibbs, Vanney, Ralston, Mastroeni (Mulrooney 46), Reyna (Stewart 46), Lewis, Donovan, McBride (Mathis 46).
Cuba: Molina - Rivero (Cervantes 46), Marquez, Pedro, Cruzata, Ramirez, Dalcourt (Ruiz 68), More (L Perez 46), Galindo, Fernandez, Adriani. *Sent off: Fernandez 43min.*

July 19 - Foxboro
Costa Rica 5 (Scott 11, Centeno 45, pen 68, pen 90, Bryce 71)
El Salvador 2 (Murgas pen 34, Pacheco 53)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 15,627. **Ref:** Ramos (Mex)
Costa Rica: R Gonzalez - Marin, A Castro (Bennett 81), G Martinez, Lopez (Vallejos 76), M Solis, Centeno, Scott, Wright, W Parks (Bryce 66), C Castro.
El Salvador: Gomez - Torres Cabrera (Cabrera 83), Marvin Gonzalez, V Velasquez, Sanchez (D Mejia 70), Corrales, Ochoa (Torres Alegria 74), Menjivar, Murgas, Pacheco, Moran.

July 20 - Miami
Colombia 0
Brazil 2 (Kaka 42, 66)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 23,425. **Ref:** Stott (USA)
Colombia: Mondragon - Bustos, Mera, Perea, Virviescas, Patino, J Restrepo, Velasquez (J Castillo 46), Hernandez (Vasquez 46), Molina, Murillo. *Sent off: Vasquez 82min.*
Brazil: Gomes - Maicon, Luisao, Alex Costa, Adriano Claro, Paulo Almeida, Julio Baptista, Kaka, Diego, Robinho (Carlos Alberto 79), Nilmar.

July 20 - Mexico City
Mexico 5 (Bravo 38, R Garcia 42, Osorno 55, Borgetti 61, Juan P Rodriguez 83)
Jamaica 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Navarro (Can)
Mexico: O Sanchez - Salazar, Osorio (Mendez 73), Carmona, Briseno, Juan P Rodriguez, R Garcia, Valdez, Arellano (Zepeda 72), Borgetti, Bravo (Osorno 54).
Jamaica: Ricketts - Stewart, M Johnson, J Lawrence, Byfield (Neil 70), Whitmore, A Williams (Taylor 4), Gardner, Langley (Daley 59), Ziadie, McDonald.

Semi-finals

July 23 - Miami
United States 1 (Bocanegra 62)
Brazil 2 (Kaka 89, Diego pen 100 - golden goal)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 1-1. **Att:** 35,211. **Ref:** Batres (Gtm)
USA: Keller - Hejduk, Bocanegra, Gibbs, Lewis, Stewart (Beasley 83), Reyna (Mulrooney 71), Convey, Mastroeni, McBride (Mathis 30), Donovan. *Sent off: Gibbs 100min.*
Brazil: Gomes - Maicon, Luisao, Alex Costa, Adriano Claro, Paulo Almeida, Julio Baptista, Kaka, Diego, Robinho (Carlos Alberto 75), Nilmar (Nadson 81).

July 24 - Mexico City
Costa Rica 0
Mexico 2 (Marquez 19, Borgetti 28)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Alfaro (ES)
Costa Rica: R Gonzalez - Marin, A Castro, G Martinez (Chinchilla 46), Lopez (Bryce 67), Centeno, Vallejos, Scott, Wright, W Parks (R Fonseca 55), C Castro.
Mexico: O Sanchez - Briseno, Marquez (Salazar 46), Osorio, Carmona, Valdez, Bravo (Osorno 65), Pardo, Borgetti, R Garcia, Arellano (Juan P Rodriguez 77).

Third-place play-off

July 26 - Miami
United States 3 (Bocanegra 29, Stewart 56, Convey 67)
Costa Rica 2 (R Fonseca 24, 39)
HT: 1-2. **Ref:** Piper (T&T)
USA: Keller - Hejduk, Califf, Bocanegra, Vanney, Mulrooney, Convey (Mastroeni 87), Ralston (Mathis 70), Beasley (Lewis 78), Stewart, Donovan.
Costa Rica: Mesen - Marin, Wright, Chinchilla, A Castro (Bennett 35), M Solis, Centeno, Bryce, L Gonzalez (W Parks 74), Lopez (Scott 60), R Fonseca.

Final

July 27 - Mexico City
Brazil 0
Mexico 1 (Osorno 97 - golden goal)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 0-0. **Att:** 80,000. **Ref:** Navarro (Can)
Brazil: Gomes - Maicon, Luisao, Alex Costa, Adriano Claro (Coelho 60), Paulo Almeida, Julio Baptista, Kaka, Diego, Robinho (Carlos Alberto 46), Nilmar (Ewerthon 90).
Mexico: O Sanchez - Carmona, Salazar (Mendez 76), Osorio, Briseno, Valdez, Pardo, R Garcia (Osorno 65), Arellano (Juan P Rodriguez 65), Borgetti, L Perez.

INTERNATIONALS

Thursday, June 26

June 26 - Miami, USA - friendly
Peru 1 (Carmona 74)
Venezuela 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Kennedy (USA)
Peru: Delgado (Ibanez 46) - Jorge Soto, Galliquio, Jose Soto (Marengo 72), Vasquez, Jayo (Bernales 71), Ciurlizza, Zegarra (Olcese 48), Quinteros (Carmona 72), Silva (Orejuela 75), Farfan.
Venezuela: Angelucci (Sanhouse 78) - Vallenilla, Alvarado (Rey 56), Cichero, Rojas, L Vera, Jimenez, Urdaneta, Garcia, Arango (Casseres), Noriega. *Sent off: L Vera 59min.*

Friday, June 27

June 27 - Panama City - friendly
Panama 2 (Tejada 23, Garces 81)
Cuba 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Moreno (Pan)
Panama: Portillo - Miranda, Baloy, Moreno, Perez (Mendez 67), Stewart (Guardia 75), Gomez, M Torres, Justavino, Garces (Mendieta 84), Tejada (Brown 70).
Cuba: Reve - Fernandez, Marquez, Rivero (Adriani 35), Cruzata, Pedro, Ramirez, L Perez, Cervantes (Morales 74), Galindo, More (Dalcourt 67).

Sunday, June 29

June 29 - San Pedro Sula - friendly
Honduras 1 (Velasquez 64)
El Salvador 1 (D Mejia 80)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Porras (CR)
Honduras: Coello - Alvarez (W Palacios 57), Javier Martinez, Rosales, R Morales (Vallecillos 61), Bonilla, Guifarro, Oliva (Hernandez 46), E Martinez (C Santamaria 61), Jairo Martinez (De Leon 46), Velasquez.
El Salvador: Gomez - Marvin Gonzalez, V Velasquez, Sanchez, Torres Cabrera, Pacheco (Navarro 74), Murgas, Carbrera (Moran 46), Campos, Corrales (Menjivar 89), Torres Alegria (D Mejia 65).

June 29 - Panama City - friendly
Panama 1 (Tejada 55)
Cuba 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Vidal (Pan)
Panama: Portillo (Panego 46) - Baloy, Moreno, Gomez, M Torres (J Ortega 46), Stewart (De la Rosa 64), Justavino, Tejada, Garces, Guardia, Mendez.
Cuba: Molina - Adriani, Cruzata, Pedro, Fernandez, Valencia, Marquez, Ramirez, L Perez, Galindo, More (Morales 70).

Wednesday, July 2

July 2 - San Francisco, USA - friendly
El Salvador 0
Paraguay 1 (Samudio 2)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Valenzuela (USA)
El Salvador: Gomez - Marvin Gonzalez, V Velasquez, Sanchez, Torres Cabrera, Moran, Murgas, Navarro, Campos, Corrales, Torres Alegria.
Paraguay: Villar - Zorrilla, Ayala, Maldonado, Nunez, Bonet, Fretes (Morinigo 46), A Ortiz, Campos (V Ortiz 73), Samudio (Bareiro 85), Soto (Achucarro 76).

July 2 - San Francisco, USA - friendly
Peru 2 (Silva 14, Orejuela 34)
Guatemala 1 (Romero pen 82)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Hall (USA)
Peru: Delgado (Buitron 46) - Jose Soto (Corcuera 77), Galliquio (Condemarin 66), Vasquez (Salas 46), Jayo (Zegarra 77), Ciurlizza (Bernales 46), Carmona, Quinteros (Olcese 46), Orejuela, Silva, Jorge Soto.
Guatemala: E Estrada - Morales, Jimenez (M Gonzalez 2), Aguirre (Rodriguez 29), Thompson, Machon, Monterroso, E Gonzalez (Romero 56), Valencia, Acevedo, Plata (Pezzarossi 58).

Thursday, July 3

July 3 - Port-of-Spain - friendly
Trinidad & Tobago 2 (S John pen 47, 83)
Venezuela 2 (Casseres 1, 49)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 7,500. **Ref:** Piper (T&T)
Trinidad & Tobago: J M Williams - Thomas, Lawrence, Carrington, Saunders (Noel 81), Daniel, Edwards, Baptiste (Davis 61), S John, Spann (K Williams 90), Sam (N Pierre 70).
Venezuela: Sanhouse - Vallenilla, Vielma, Rey, Rojas, Urdaneta (Paez 80), Villafraz (L Vera 88), Jimenez, G Perez (Cichero 74), Moran (Noriega 66), Casseres (Arango 78). *Sent off: Rey 65min.*

Sunday, July 6

July 6 - Kingston - friendly
Jamaica 1 (Langley 86)
Cuba 2 (Fernandez 20, Marquez 28)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 8,500. **Ref:** Bowen (Cay)
Jamaica: A Lawrence (Sawyers) - McDonald, Neil, Stewart, Gardner, Scarlett (Kelly), Daley (Nelson), Langley, Chin-Sue (Byfield), Lowe, Taylor.
Cuba: Molina - Cruzata, Minoso, Fernandez, Colome, Marquez, Ramirez, L Perez, Galindo, More, Adriani.

July 6 - Carson, USA - friendly
Mexico 1 (Osorno 77)
El Salvador 2 (D Mejia 30, Corrales 60)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 19,271. **Ref:** Hall (USA)
Mexico: O Sanchez - Brown, Briseno, Mendez, Valdez (Rergis 63), Pardo, Zepeda (Osorno 63), Juan P Rodriguez (L Perez 46; Rubirosa 57), Arellano (R Garcia 46), Borgetti, Bravo (Trujillo 46).
El Salvador: Gomez - Marvin Gonzalez (J Castro 90), V Velasquez, Sanchez (Pacheco 56), Torres Cabrera (Navarro 88), Cienfuegos (Cabrera 43), Torres Alegria (Mejivar 70), Murgas, Moran, D Mejia (Campos 73), Corrales (Ochoa 81).

July 6 - Columbus - friendly
United States 2 (Donovan 12, Stewart 90)
Paraguay 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 14,103. **Ref:** Navarro (Can)
USA: Keller - Vanney, Gibbs (Garcia 87), Bocanegra, Hejduk, Mulrooney, Beasley, Convey (Reyna 61), Stewart, Donovan (McBride 90), Mathis (Lewis 71).
Paraguay: Villar - Mendoza, Maldonado, Ayala, Nunez, Gavilan (Avalos 69), A Ortiz, Bonet, Campos (V Ortiz 46), Soto (Acucharro 70), Samudio (Bareiro 46).

Tuesday, July 8

July 8 - Houston, USA - friendly
Guatemala 2 (Plata 58, Aguirre 65)
El Salvador 1 (Murgas 68)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 21,047. **Ref:** Hall (USA)
Guatemala: E Estrada - Valencia, Martinez, M Gonzalez, Thompson (Aguirre 50), Monterroso, Romero, Machon, Garcia (Morales 70), Rodriguez (Plata 55), Acevedo. *Sent off: Valencia.*
El Salvador: Gomez - J Castro, Menjivar, V Velasquez, Pacheco, Torres Cabrera, Navarro (Torres Alegria 46), Moran (Murgas 46), Ochoa (D Mejia 46), Cabrera, Campos (Corrales 46).

Wednesday, July 9

July 9 - Kingston - friendly
Jamaica 2 (Byfield 11, Langley 28)
Paraguay 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Bowen (Cay)
Jamaica: Ricketts - C Davis (McDonald 74), Marshall, Ziadie (Neil 81), M Johnson, Gardner (Taylor 74), J Lawrence, Whitmore, Langley (Daley 74), Byfield, A Williams (Lowe 74).
Paraguay: Villar - Mendoza (Fretes 62), Caballero, Maldonado, Nunez, Gavilan (Avalos 46), Bonet, A Ortiz (E Gonzalez 46), V Ortiz, Samudio (Cardenas 55), Bareiro (Zorilla 34). *Sent off: Villar 54min.*

Sunday, July 13

July 13 - Mbabane - COSAFA Cup quarter-final
Swaziland 2 (Siza Dlamini 30, M Dlamini 52)
Madagascar 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 8,000. **Ref:** Mpofu (Bot)
Swaziland: S Dube - C Dube, Gamedze, Masangane, Ngubane, Mthethwa, Nhleko, Mdluli, Masina, Siza Dlamini (Mkhwanazi 82), M Dlamini (Kunene 67). *Sent off: Mdluli 58min.*
Madagascar: Raharison - Oumouri (Rakotondrabe 66), Radafison, Randrianoelison, M Razafindrakoto, Jambay, Radonamahafalison, Paul (Voavu 72), Suivestin, Rakotomandimby (Rajaobary 63), Ralison. *Sent off: Ralison 54min.*

Wednesday, July 16

July 16 - La Plata - friendly
Argentina 2 (D Milito 4, 10)
Uruguay 2 (Chevanton 7, G Milito og 37)
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Gonzalez (Par)
Argentina: Costanzo - Diaz, G Milito, C Rodriguez, L Gonzalez, Mascherano, Dominguez, D'Alessandro, C Delgado (M Gonzalez 76), D Milito, Insua (Guinazu 70).
Uruguay: Barbat - Guigou, Sorondo (Lago 5), Lopez (Bizera 73), Regueiro, Giacomazzi (Martinez 79), Sosa, Liguera, Pandiani (Perrone 89), Chevanton, Sanchez (Bueno 69).

Saturday, July 19

July 19 - East London - COSAFA Cup quarter-final
South Africa 0
Zimbabwe 1 (Muhoni 15)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Raolimanana (Mad)
South Africa: Josephs - Mnguni, Mahoa, Mkhonza, Malinga, Mhlongo, Mabalane, Schalkwyk, Makua (Matsau 62), Phakathi, Raselemane (Ngwenya 83).
Zimbabwe: Murambadoro - Mpofu, Nyandoro, B Ndlovu, Kapenya, Tembo, Muhoni, Yohane, Pasuwa, P Ndlovu, A Ndlovu.

AFRICAN NATIONS CUP 2004 QUALIFIERS

Final standings

Group 1

July 6 - Luanda
Angola 5 (Maupo Msowoya 2, Akwa 3, Flavio 33, Stopirra 76, Chinho 89)
Malawi 1 (Mgangira 78)
HT: 3-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nigeria	4	2	2	0	7	3	8
Angola	4	1	2	1	7	4	5
Malawi	4	1	0	3	3	10	3

08.09.02 .....Angola-Nigeria 0-0
12.10.02 .....Malawi-Angola 1-0
29.03.03 .....Malawi-Nigeria.....0-1
07.06.03 .....Nigeria-Malawi.....4-1
21.06.03 .....Nigeria-Angola 2-2
06.07.03 .....Angola-Malawi 5-1
Djibouti withdrew

Group 2

July 5 - Niamey
Niger 1 (Alhassan pen 90)
Liberia 0
HT: 0-0

July 6 - Conakry
Guinea 3 (Youla 32, 72, Feindouno 55)
Ethiopia 0
HT: 1-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guinea	6	4	0	2	10	3	12
Niger	6	3	0	3	5	6	9
Ethiopia	6	3	0	3	5	7	9
Liberia	6	2	0	4	3	7	6

07.09.02 .....Niger-Ethiopia 3-1
08.09.02 .....Guinea-Liberia.....3-0
12.10.02 .....Liberia-Niger 1-0
13.10.02 .....Ethiopia-Guinea.....1-0
30.03.03 .....Ethiopia-Liberia.....1-0
30.03.03 .....Guinea-Niger 2-0
07.06.03 .....Niger-Guinea 1-0
08.06.03 .....Liberia-Ethiopia.....1-0
21.06.03 .....Liberia-Guinea.....1-2
22.06.03 .....Ethiopia-Niger 2-0
05.07.03 .....Niger-Liberia 1-0
06.07.03 .....Guinea-Ethiopia.....3-0

Group 3

July 6 - Cotonou
Benin 3 (Tchomogo 9, 26, Latoundji 75)
Zambia 0
HT: 2-0

July 6 - Sudan v Tanzania
Tanzania withdrew

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Benin	6	4	1	1	12	4	13
Zambia	6	3	2	1	6	5	11
Sudan	5	2	1	2	6	6	7
Tanzania	5	0	0	5	1	10	0

08.09.02 .....Benin-Tanzania 4-0
08.09.02 .....Sudan-Zambia 0-1
12.10.02 .....Tanzania-Sudan 1-2
12.10.02 .....Zambia-Benin 1-1
29.03.03 .....Sudan-Benin 3-0
29.03.03 .....Tanzania-Zambia 0-1
07.06.03 .....Zambia-Tanzania 2-0
08.06.03 .....Benin-Sudan 3-0
21.06.03 .....Zambia-Sudan 1-1
22.06.03 .....Tanzania-Benin.....0-1
06.07.03 .....Benin-Zambia 3-0
06.07.03 .....Sudan-Tanzania.....void

Group 4

July 6 - Bangui
Central African Republic 0
Burkina Faso 3

July 6 - Brazzaville
Congo 0
Mozambique 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burkina Faso	6	4	1	1	12	2	13
Congo	6	2	3	1	5	4	9
Mozambique	6	2	2	2	3	8	8
Cent Af Rep	6	0	2	4	3	9	2

08.09.02 .....Congo-Burkina Faso 0-0
09.09.02 .....Central African Rep-Mozambique....1-1
13.10.02 .....Burkina Faso-Central African Rep...2-1
13.10.02 .....Mozambique-Congo.....0-3
30.03.03 .....Mozambique-Burkina Faso.....1-0
04.05.03 .....Congo-Central African Rep 2-1
07.06.03 .....Burkina Faso-Mozambique 4-0
08.06.03 .....Central African Rep-Congo 0-0
21.06.03 .....Burkina Faso-Congo 3-0
22.06.03 .....Mozambique-Central African Rep....1-0
06.07.03 .....Central African Rep-Burkina Faso...0-3
06.07.03 .....Congo-Mozambique.....0-0

Group 5

July 5 - Nairobi
Kenya 1 (Oliech 84)
Cape Verde Islands 0
HT: 0-0

July 5 - Nouakchott
Mauritania 0
Togo 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kenya	6	4	1	1	9	2	13
Togo	6	3	1	2	9	7	10
Cape Verde Is	6	3	0	3	9	8	9
Mauritania	6	0	2	4	0	10	2

06.09.02 .....Mauritania-Cape Verde Islands.....0-2
07.09.02 .....Kenya-Togo.....3-0
12.10.02 .....Cape Verde Islands-Kenya 0-1
12.10.02 .....Togo-Mauritania 1-0
29.03.03 .....Cape Verde Islands-Togo 2-1
29.03.03 .....Kenya-Mauritania 4-0
06.06.03 .....Mauritania-Kenya 0-0
08.06.03 .....Togo-Cape Verde Islands.....5-2
21.06.03 .....Cape Verde Islands-Mauritania.....3-0
22.06.03 .....Togo-Kenya.....2-0
05.07.03 .....Kenya-Cape Verde Islands.....1-0
05.07.03 .....Mauritania-Togo 0-0

Group 6

July 5 - Victoria
Seychelles 0
Mali 2 (Traore 60, Toure 85)
HT: 0-0

July 5 - Harare
Zimbabwe 2 (P Ndlovu 11, pen 17)
Eritrea 0
HT: 2-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mali	6	4	1	1	8	1	13
Zimbabwe	6	4	1	1	8	3	13
Seychelles	6	2	0	4	4	10	6
Eritrea	6	1	0	5	1	7	3

08.09.02 .....Seychelles-Eritrea.....1-0
08.09.02 .....Zimbabwe-Mali 1-0
12.10.02 .....Eritrea-Zimbabwe 0-1
13.10.02 .....Mali-Seychelles 3-0
30.03.03 .....Eritrea-Mali 0-2
30.03.03 .....Zimbabwe-Seychelles 3-1
07.06.03 .....Mali-Eritrea 1-0
07.06.03 .....Seychelles-Zimbabwe 2-1
21.06.03 .....Eritrea-Seychelles.....1-0
22.06.03 .....Mali-Zimbabwe 0-0
05.07.03 .....Seychelles-Mali 0-2
05.07.03 .....Zimbabwe-Eritrea 2-0

Group 7

July 6 - Malabo
Equatorial Guinea 0
Morocco 1

July 6 - Libreville
Gabon 2
Sierra Leone 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Morocco	6	5	1	0	10	0	16
Sierra Leone	6	3	1	2	7	4	10
Gabon	6	2	0	4	7	7	6
Equatorial Guinea	6	1	0	5	3	16	3

07.09.02.....Gabon-Morocco.....0-1
08.09.02.....Equatorial Guinea-Sierra Leone.....1-3
12.10.02.....Sierra Leone-Gabon.....2-0
13.10.02.....Morocco-Equatorial Guinea.....5-0
29.03.03.....Gabon-Equatorial Guinea.....4-0
29.03.03.....Sierra Leone-Morocco.....0-0
08.06.03.....Equatorial Guinea-Gabon.....2-1
08.06.03.....Morocco-Sierra Leone.....1-0
20.06.03.....Morocco-Gabon.....2-0
22.06.03.....Sierra Leone-Equatorial Guinea.....2-0
06.07.03.....Equatorial Guinea-Morocco.....0-1
06.07.03.....Gabon-Sierra Leone.....2-0

Group 8

July 6 - Maseru
Lesotho 1 (Makhele 87)
Gambia 0
HT: 0-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Senegal	4	3	1	0	7	1	10
Gambia	4	1	1	2	7	4	4
Lesotho	4	1	0	3	1	10	3

08.09.02.....Lesotho-Senegal.....0-1
13.10.02.....Gambia-Lesotho.....6-0
30.03.03.....Gambia-Senegal.....0-0
07.06.03.....Senegal-Gambia.....3-1
14.06.03.....Senegal-Lesotho.....3-0
06.07.03.....Lesotho-Gambia.....1-0
Sao Tome e Principe withdrew

Group 9

July 5 - Gaborone
Botswana 0
DR Congo 0

July 5 - Tripoli
Libya 6
Swaziland 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
DR Congo	6	3	2	1	9	5	11
Libya	6	3	1	2	12	8	10
Swaziland	6	2	2	2	8	12	8
Botswana	6	0	3	3	2	6	3

07.09.02.....Botswana-Swaziland.....0-0
08.09.02.....Libya-DR Congo.....3-2
13.10.02.....DR Congo-Botswana.....2-0
13.10.02.....Swaziland-Libya.....2-1
30.03.03.....Libya-Botswana.....0-0
30.03.03.....Swaziland-DR Congo.....1-1
07.06.03.....Botswana-Libya.....0-1
08.06.03.....DR Congo-Swaziland.....2-0
22.06.03.....DR Congo-Libya.....2-1
22.06.03.....Swaziland-Botswana.....3-2
05.07.03.....Botswana-DR Congo.....0-0
05.07.03.....Libya-Swaziland.....6-2

Group 10

July 6 - Antananarivo
Madagascar 0
Mauritius 2 (Perle 16, Appou pen 31)
HT: 0-2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Egypt	4	3	0	1	14	1	9
Madagascar	4	2	0	2	2	8	6
Mauritius	4	1	0	3	2	9	3

07.09.02.....Madagascar-Egypt.....1-0
12.10.02.....Mauritius-Madagascar.....0-1
29.03.03.....Mauritius-Egypt.....0-1
08.06.03.....Egypt-Mauritius.....7-0
20.06.03.....Egypt-Madagascar.....6-0
06.07.03.....Madagascar-Mauritius.....0-2
Guinea-Bissau withdrew

Group 11

July 6 - Bujumbura
Burundi 0
South Africa 2 (T Mokoena 1, Fredericks 30)
HT: 0-2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Africa	4	3	1	0	6	1	10
Ivory Coast	4	2	1	1	8	3	7
Burundi	4	0	0	4	1	11	0

08.09.02.....Ivory Coast-South Africa.....0-0
13.10.02.....South Africa-Burundi.....2-0
30.03.03.....Burundi-Ivory Coast.....0-1
08.06.03.....Ivory Coast-Burundi.....6-1
22.06.03.....South Africa-Ivory Coast.....2-1
06.07.03.....Burundi-South Africa.....0-2

Group 12

July 6 - Ndjamena
Chad 0
Algeria 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Algeria	4	3	1	0	6	1	10
Chad	4	1	1	2	4	6	4
Namibia	4	1	0	3	2	5	3

07.09.02.....Namibia-Algeria.....0-1
11.10.02.....Algeria-Chad.....4-1
30.03.03.....Chad-Namibia.....2-0
07.06.03.....Namibia-Chad.....2-1
20.06.03.....Algeria-Namibia.....1-0
06.07.03.....Chad-Algeria.....0-0

Group 13

July 6 - Kigali
Rwanda 1 (Gatete 49)
Ghana 0
HT: 0-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rwanda	4	2	1	1	4	4	7
Uganda	4	1	2	1	2	2	5
Ghana	4	1	1	2	5	5	4

07.09.02.....Uganda-Ghana.....1-0
13.10.02.....Ghana-Rwanda.....4-2
29.03.03.....Rwanda-Uganda.....0-0
07.06.03.....Uganda-Rwanda.....0-1
22.06.03.....Ghana-Uganda.....1-1
06.07.03.....Rwanda-Ghana.....1-0

The qualifiers

Tunisia (as hosts); **Cameroon** (as holders); **Nigeria, Guinea, Benin, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Senegal, DR Congo, Egypt, South Africa, Algeria, Rwanda** (the 13 qualifying group winners);
Zimbabwe (as best runners-up in qualifying groups)

BALTIC CUP

July 3 - Valga, Estonia
Estonia 1 (Sirel 57)
Lithuania 5 (Morinas 39, D Cesnauskis 45, Velicka 72, Bezykornovas 84, E Cesnauskis 90)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Ingvarsson (Swe)
Estonia: Pareiko - Kulikov (Zahhovaiko 46), Sirel, Kallaste, Klavan, M Rooba, Smirnov (Reinumae 65), Leetma, Viikmae, Kristal, Saharov (Lindpere 54).
Lithuania: Karcemarskas (Padimanskas 88) - Alunderis, Dedura, Radzius, Maciulevicius (Tamosauskas 55), Regelskis, Mikalajunas (E Cesnauskis 46), Morinas (Zelmikas 82), Petrenka (Lemezis 80), D Cesnauskis (Bezykornovas 75), Beniusis (Velicka 71).

July 4 - Valga, Estonia
Latvia 2 (Laizans 28, Rubins 32)
Lithuania 1 (Tamosauskas 73)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Frojdfeldt (Swe)
Latvia: Kolinko - Zirnis, Astafjevs, Blagonadezdins, Zemlinskis, Laizans, Isakovs, Stolcers (Lobanovs 71), Verpakovskis (Rimkus 46; Miholaps 78), Rubins (Semjonovs 80), Dobrecovs (Pucinskis 66).
Lithuania: Karcemarskas - Alunderis, Dedura, Radzius, Maciulevicius (Tamosauskas 46), Regelskis (Bezykornovas 71), E Cesnauskis (Mikalajunas 66), Morinas, Petrenka, D Cesnauskis (Lemezis 74), Beniusis (Velicka 46).

July 5 - Tallinn, Estonia
Estonia 0
Latvia 0
Ref: Ingvarsson (Swe)
Estonia: Poom - M Rooba, Stepanov, Jaager, U Rooba, Leetma, Smirnov (Reinumae 69), Kristal, Viikmae (Zahhovaiko 75), Lindpere, Terehhov (Saharov 83).
Latvia: Piedels - Zirnis, Astafjevs, Smirnovs, Laizans, Blagonadezdins, Isakovs, Stolcers, Miholaps (Semjonovs 52), Rubins, Dobrecovs (Blanks 76).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Latvia	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Lithuania	2	1	0	1	6	3	3
Estonia	2	0	1	1	1	5	1

SOUTH PACIFIC GAMES

In Fiji

Pool A

June 30
Tuvalu 3 (P Fagota, Manoa, Semaia)
Kiribati 2 (Neemia 2)

June 30
Fiji 0
Vanuatu 0

July 1
Fiji 4 (Masinasau 2, Kumar 2)
Tuvalu 0

July 1
Solomon Islands 2 (Menapi 2)
Vanuatu 2 (Mermer, Qorig)

July 3
Solomon Islands 7 (Mehau, Waita, Menapi 5)
Kiribati 0

July 3 - Suva
Tuvalu 0
Vanuatu 1 (Tabe 86)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 700. **Ref:** Bayung (PNG)

July 5 - Nausori
Tuvalu 0
Solomon Islands 4 (Maniadalo 16, Menapi 27, 87, B Suri 80)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 2,500. **Ref:** Bayung (PNG)

July 5 - Ratu Cakobau Park
Fiji 12 (Vulivuli 7, E Masi 17, 31, 47, 48, 51, 54, 68, Gatarua 28, Rabo 33, Rodu 88, Baleinuku 89)
Kiribati 0
HT: 5-0. **Att:** 4,000. **Ref:** Attison (Van)

July 7 - Lautoka
Kiribati 0
Vanuatu 18 (Mermer 4, 15, 51, 53, S Chilia 10, 22, 29, 30, Iwai 27, 40, 41, 63, 64, Tabe 35, Vava 47, Thomsen 54, Demas 62, Pita 83)
HT: 0-10. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Bayung (PNG)

July 7 - Lautoka
Fiji 2 (Veresa Toma 4, E Masi 13)
Solomon Islands 1 (Menapi 68)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Ariiotima (Tah)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fiji	4	3	1	0	18	1	10
Vanuatu	4	2	2	0	21	2	8
Solomon Islands	4	2	1	1	14	4	7
Tuvalu	4	1	0	3	3	11	3
Kiribati	4	0	0	4	2	40	0

Pool B

June 30
Tahiti 17 (Neuffer, Senechal, N Bennett 4, Guyon 3, Terevaura, Tchen, Fatupua-Lecaill, Papaura, Tagawa 4)
Micronesia 0

June 30
Papua New Guinea 0
New Caledonia 2 (Djamali, Hmae)

July 1
Micronesia 0
New Caledonia 18 (Luenu, Dian, Poatinda 6, Iviako, Wajoka 3, Dahote, Elmour, Hmae 4)

July 1
Papua New Guinea 2 (Habuka, Sow)
Tonga 2 (Fe'Ao 2)
HT: 1-0

July 3
Tonga 0
New Caledonia 4 (Cawa, Djamali, Dokunengo, Kabeu)
HT: 0-2

July 3
Tahiti 3 (N Bennett 2, Tagawa 1)
Papua New Guinea 0
HT: 1-0
Sent off: Maurirere (Tahiti)

July 5 - Nausori
Tonga 7 (I Fonua 5, Tevi 15, Uhatai 22, 36, Feao 34, 55, Uele 72)
Micronesia 0
HT: 5-0. **Att:** 1,000. **Ref:** Moli (Sol)

July 5 - Nausori
Tahiti 0
New Caledonia 4 (Lameu 10, 41, Djamali 31, Poatinda 88)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 3,000. **Ref:** Shah (Fij)

July 7 - Lautoka
Tahiti 4 (Tagawa 2, 27, N Bennett 81, 83)
Tonga 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 3,000. **Ref:** Shah (Fij)

July 7 - Lautoka
Papua New Guinea 10 (A Davani 5, 6, 51, Pomat 17, 37, Foster 36, C Posman 67, 74, Ire 79, Lepani 90)
Micronesia 0
HT: 5-0. **Att:** 3,500. **Ref:** Ogston (Aus)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
New Caledonia	4	4	0	0	28	0	12
Tahiti	4	3	0	1	24	4	9
Papua NG	4	1	1	2	12	7	4
Tonga	4	1	1	2	9	10	4
Micronesia	4	0	0	4	0	52	0

Top two from each group qualified for semi-finals

Semi-finals

July 9 - Lautoka
Fiji 2 (Waqa 9, Veresa Toma 106)
Tahiti 1 (Papura 4)
Aet. **HT:** 1-1. **90mins:** 1-1. **Att:** 8,000. **Ref:** Attison (Van)
Fiji: Tamanisau - Dau, Kainihewe, Vulivuli (Baleinuku 97), Veresa Toma, Rabo (M Masi 73), E Masi, Waqa (Gatarua 66), Kumar, Rokotakala, Pononi.
Tahiti: Tapeta - Tchen (Tauhara 106), Maurirere, Lecaill (R Bennett 87), Boene, Papura (Senechal 77), Auraa, Zaveroni, Tagawa, N Bennett, Terevarua.

July 9 - Lautoka
New Caledonia 1 (Kabeu 44)
Vanuatu 1 (Maki 54)
Aet. **HT:** 1-0. **90mins:** 1-1. **Att:** 7,000. **Ref:** Shah (Fij)
New Caledonia 4-3 on pens
New Caledonia: Hne - Case, Djamali, Oliver (Jacques 87), Elmour, Hmae, Lameu (Poatinda 68), Logue, Oiremoin, Sinedo, Wajoka (Cawa 54).
Vanuatu: D Chilia - Tabe, Bibi, Simon, Demas, S Chilia, Mermer, Iwai, Maki (Thomsen 69), D K Alick, Qorig (Joe 120).

Third-place play-off

July 11 - Suva
Tahiti 0
Vanuatu 1 (Mermer 57)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Rakaroi (Fij)
Tahiti: Tapeta - Maurirere, Boene, Papaura, Auraa, Zaveroni, Tagawa, Senechal, Guyon (N Bennett 46), Terevarua, R Bennett.
Vanuatu: Garae - Bibi, Simon, Demas, Silas, S Chilia, Mermer (Maki 68), Thomsen (Frank 54), Iwai (Joe 87), D K Alick, Qorig.

Final

July 11 - Suva
Fiji 2 (M Masi 30, E Masi 63)
New Caledonia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Attison (Van)
Fiji: Tamanisau - Dau, M Masi (Rabo 73), Kainihewe (Baleinuku 79), Vulivuli, Veresa Toma, E Masi, Waqa, Kumar, Rokotakala (Gatarua 86), Pononi.
New Caledonia: Hne - Case, Cawa, Djamali, Elmour (Luenu 78), Hmae, Logue, Poatinda (Lameu 57), Sinedo, Jacky (Oiremoin 46), Wajoka.

WORLD CUP 2006 QUALIFIERS

32 finals berths
14 .....Europe (including hosts Germany)
5 .....Africa
4.5 .....Asia
4.5 .....South America
3.5 .....North & Central America
0.5 .....Oceania

AFRICA

Preliminary round

Botswana v Lesotho
Burkina Faso v Central African Republic
Burundi v Gabon
Chad v Angola
Congo v Sierra Leone
Equatorial Guinea v Togo
Ethiopia v Malawi
Gambia v Liberia
Guinea v Mozambique
Guinea-Bissau v Mali
Madagascar v Benin
Niger v Algeria
Rwanda v Namibia
Sao Tome e Principe v Libya
Seychelles v Zambia
Somalia v Ghana
Sudan v Eritrea
Swaziland v Cape Verde Islands
Tanzania v Kenya
Uganda v Mauritius
Zimbabwe v Mauritania
1st legs, October 11, 2003;
2nd legs, November 14-16, 2003

Winners progress to qualifying groups

Byes: Cameroon, DR Congo, Egypt, Ivory Coast, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia

● *The 30 qualifying countries will be drawn into five groups of six, with the winners going to the finals*

SOUTH AMERICA

06/07.09.03.....Argentina-Chile
06/07.09.03.....Colombia-Brazil
06/07.09.03.....Ecuador-Venezuela
06/07.09.03.....Peru-Paraguay
06/07.09.03.....Uruguay-Bolivia
09/10.09.03.....Bolivia-Colombia
09/10.09.03.....Brazil-Ecuador
09/10.09.03.....Chile-Peru
09/10.09.03.....Paraguay-Uruguay
09/10.09.03.....Venezuela-Argentina
15/16.11.03.....Argentina-Bolivia
15/16.11.03.....Colombia-Venezuela
15/16.11.03.....Paraguay-Ecuador
15/16.11.03.....Peru-Brazil
15/16.11.03.....Uruguay-Chile
18/19.11.03.....Brazil-Uruguay
18/19.11.03.....Chile-Paraguay
18/19.11.03.....Colombia-Argentina
18/19.11.03.....Ecuador-Peru
18/19.11.03.....Venezuela-Bolivia
30/31.03.04.....Argentina-Ecuador
30/31.03.04.....Bolivia-Chile
30/31.03.04.....Paraguay-Brazil
30/31.03.04.....Peru-Colombia
30/31.03.04.....Uruguay-Venezuela
01/02.06.04.....Bolivia-Paraguay
01/02.06.04.....Brazil-Argentina
01/02.06.04.....Ecuador-Colombia
01/02.06.04.....Uruguay-Peru
01/02.06.04.....Venezuela-Chile
04/05.06.04.....Argentina-Paraguay
04/05.06.04.....Chile-Brazil
04/05.06.04.....Colombia-Uruguay
04/05.06.04.....Ecuador-Bolivia
04/05.06.04.....Peru-Venezuela
04/05.09.04.....Brazil-Bolivia
04/05.09.04.....Chile-Colombia
04/05.09.04.....Paraguay-Venezuela
04/05.09.04.....Peru-Argentina
04/05.09.04.....Uruguay-Ecuador
09/10.10.04.....Argentina-Uruguay
09/10.10.04.....Bolivia-Peru
09/10.10.04.....Colombia-Paraguay
09/10.10.04.....Ecuador-Chile
09/10.10.04.....Venezuela-Brazil
12/13.10.04.....Bolivia-Uruguay
12/13.10.04.....Brazil-Colombia
12/13.10.04.....Chile-Argentina
12/13.10.04.....Paraguay-Peru
12/13.10.04.....Venezuela-Ecuador
16/17.11.04.....Argentina-Venezuela
16/17.11.04.....Colombia-Bolivia
16/17.11.04.....Ecuador-Brazil
16/17.11.04.....Peru-Chile
16/17.11.04.....Uruguay-Paraguay
26/27.03.05.....Bolivia-Argentina
26/27.03.05.....Brazil-Peru
26/27.03.05.....Chile-Uruguay
26/27.03.05.....Ecuador-Paraguay
26/27.03.05.....Venezuela-Colombia
29/30.03.05.....Argentina-Colombia
29/30.03.05.....Bolivia-Venezuela
29/30.03.05.....Paraguay-Chile
29/30.03.05.....Peru-Ecuador
29/30.03.05.....Uruguay-Brazil
04/05.06.05.....Brazil-Paraguay
04/05.06.05.....Chile-Bolivia
04/05.06.05.....Colombia-Peru
04/05.06.05.....Ecuador-Argentina
04/05.06.05.....Venezuela-Uruguay
07/08.06.05.....Argentina-Brazil
07/08.06.05.....Chile-Venezuela
07/08.06.05.....Colombia-Ecuador
07/08.06.05.....Paraguay-Bolivia
07/08.06.05.....Peru-Uruguay
03/04.09.05.....Bolivia-Ecuador
03/04.09.05.....Brazil-Chile
03/04.09.05.....Paraguay-Argentina
03/04.09.05.....Uruguay-Colombia
03/04.09.05.....Venezuela-Peru
08/09.10.05.....Argentina-Peru
08/09.10.05.....Bolivia-Brazil
08/09.10.05.....Colombia-Chile
08/09.10.05.....Ecuador-Uruguay
08/09.10.05.....Venezuela-Paraguay
11/12.10.05.....Brazil-Venezuela
11/12.10.05.....Chile-Ecuador
11/12.10.05.....Paraguay-Colombia
11/12.10.05.....Peru-Bolivia
11/12.10.05.....Uruguay-Argentina

Section to be played on a round-robin basis. Top four to qualify automatically for the finals; fifth-placed side enter a qualifying play-off

WORLD UNDER-17 CHAMPIONSHIP

Finals schedule

Group A

13.08.03.....Finland-China
13.08.03.....Mexico-Colombia
16.08.03.....China-Colombia
16.08.03.....Finland-Mexico
19.08.03.....China-Mexico
19.08.03.....Colombia-Finland

Group B

13.08.03.....Argentina-Australia
13.08.03.....Costa Rica-Nigeria
16.08.03.....Australia-Nigeria
16.08.03.....Argentina-Costa Rica
19.08.03.....Nigeria-Argentina
19.08.03.....Australia-Costa Rica

Group C

14.08.03.....Yemen-Portugal
14.08.03.....Cameroon-Brazil
17.08.03.....Portugal-Brazil
17.08.03.....Yemen-Cameroon
20.08.03.....Brazil-Yemen
20.08.03.....Portugal-Cameroon

Group D

14.08.03.....South Korea-United States
14.08.03.....Spain-Sierra Leone
17.08.03.....United States-Sierra Leone
17.08.03.....South Korea-Spain
20.08.03.....Sierra Leone-South Korea
20.08.03.....United States-Spain

Quarter-finals

23.08.03.....Gp A 1st-Gp B 2nd (QF1)
23.08.03.....Gp B 1st-Gp A 2nd (QF2)
24.08.03.....Gp C 1st-Gp D 2nd (QF3)
24.08.03.....Gp D 1st-Gp C 2nd (QF4)

Semi-finals

27.08.03.....QF1 winners-QF3 winners
27.08.03.....QF2 winners-QF4 winners

Third-place play-off

30.08.03

Final

30.08.03

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP FINALS

To be played in the United States between September 20 and October 12, 2003

Draw

Group A: United States, Sweden, Nigeria, North Korea.
Group B: Norway, France, Brazil, South Korea.
Group C: Germany, Canada, Japan, Argentina.
Group D: China, Ghana, Australia, Russia.

EUROPE

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

1st qual rnd, 1st legs

July 16

BATE Borisov (Bls) 1 (Lashankov 24)
Bohemians (Ire) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Jara (Cze)

Dinamo Tbilisi (Geo) 3 (Melkadze 6, Anchabadze 45, Daraselia pen 50)
SK Tirana (Alb) 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Malcolm (NI)

Glentoran (NI) 0
HJK Helsinki (Fin) 0
Ref: Miezelis (Lit)

Grevenmacher (Lux) 0
Leotar (Bos) 0
Ref: Megyebiro (Hun)

HB Torshavn (Far) 0
FBK Kaunas (Lit) 1 (Opic 75)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Ishchenko (Ukr)
Sent off: Gedgaudas (Kaunas) 85min

Omonia Nicosia (Cyp) 0
Irtysh Pavlodar (Kaz) 0
Ref: Zrnic (Bos)
Sent off: Haber (Omonia) 90min

Pyunik Yerevan (Arm) 1 (Pachajyan 61)
KR Reykjavik (Ice) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Ver Eecke (Blg)

Serif Tiraspol (Mol) 1 (Tudor 88)
Flora Tallinn (Est) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Sultani (Aze)

Sliema Wanderers (Mlt) 2 (Bogdanovic 62, Doncic pen 65)
Skonto Riga (Lat) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Stanisic (Ser)
Sent off: Isakovs (Skonto) 65min

Vardar Skopje (Mac) 3 (Oliveira 38, 70, Ristovski 49)
Barry Town (Wal) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Kenan (Isr)

1st qual rnd, 2nd legs

July 23

Barry Town 2 (Jarman 1, Moralee 63)
Vardar Skopje 1 (Rogerio 60)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Kapanin (Kaz)
Vardar 4-2 on agg

Bohemians 3 (Caffrey 38, Ryan 45, Crowe 58)
BATE Borisov 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Dobrinov (Bul)
Bohemians 3-1 on agg

Flora Tallinn 1 (Viikmae 88)
Serif Tiraspol 1 (Nesteruk 80)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Dean (Eng)
Serif 2-1 on agg

HJK Helsinki 1 (Makela 72)
Glentoran 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Ryszka (Pol)
Sent off: Turpeinen (HJK) 84min
HJK 1-0 on agg

Irtysh Pavlodar 1 (Agayev 21)
Omonia Nicosia 2 (Rauffmann 61, Georgiou 90)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Kari (Fin)
Omonia 2-1 on agg

FBK Kaunas 4 (Beniusis 5, 77, Kancelskis 36, Opic 40)
HB Torshavn 1 (Jacobsen 9)
HT: 3-1. **Ref:** Supraha (Cro)
Sent off: Jacobsen (HB) 79min
FBK Kaunas 5-1 on agg

KR Reykjavik 1 (Davidsson pen 82)
Pyunik Yerevan 1 (Agvan Mkrtchyan 73)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Sipailo (Lat)
Pyunik 2-1 on agg

Leotar 2 (Kerkez 23, 83)
Grevenmacher 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Helesteanu (Rom)
Sent off: Milenkovic (Leotar) 35min
Leotar 2-0 on agg

Skonto Riga 3 (Buitkus 14, Verpakovskis 64, Dedura 70)
Sliema Wanderers 1 (Brincat 90)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Culcu (Tur)
Sent off: Morozs (Skonto) 67min
Agg 3-3. Sliema on away goals

SK Tirana 3 (Lici 11, Fortuzi 64, Halili 77)
Dinamo Tbilisi 0
Aet. **HT:** 1-0. **90mins:** 3-0. **Ref:** Kelly (Ire)
Agg 3-3. Tirana 4-2 on pens

2nd qual rnd draw

Bohemians v Rosenborg (Nor)
FC Copenhagen (Den) v Sliema Wanderers
CSKA Moscow (Rus) v Vardar Skopje
FBK Kaunas v Celtic (Sco)
Leotar v Slavia Prague (Cze)
Maribor (Sln) v Dinamo Zagreb (Cro)
MSK Zilina (Slk) v Maccabi Tel Aviv (Isr)
MTK (Hun) v HJK Helsinki
Partizan Belgrade (Ser) v Djurgardens (Swe)
Pyunik Yerevan v CSKA Sofia (Bul)
Rapid Bucharest (Rom) v Anderlecht (Blg)
Serif Tiraspol v Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr)
SK Tirana v Grazer AK (Aut)
Wisla Krakow (Pol) v Omonia Nicosia
1st legs, July 30; 2nd legs, August 6

3rd qual rnd draw

Austria Wien (Aut) v Marseille (Fra)
Bohemians/Rosenborg v Deportivo La Coruna (Spa)
Celta Vigo (Spa) v Leotar/Slavia Prague
Club Brugge (Blg) v Borussia Dortmund (Ger)
CSKA Moscow/Vardar Skopje v Sparta Prague (Cze)
Galatasaray (Tur) v Pyunik Yerevan/CSKA Sofia
Grasshopper (Swi) v AEK Athens (Gre)
Kyiv Dynamo (Ukr) v Maribor/Dinamo Zagreb
Lazio (Ita) v Benfica (Por)
MSK Zilina/Maccabi Tel Aviv v Chelsea (Eng)
MTK/HJK Helsinki v FBK Kaunas/Celtic
Partizan Belgrade/Djurgardens v Newcastle United (Eng)
Rangers (Sco) v FC Copenhagen/Sliema Wanderers

Rapid Bucharest/Anderlecht v Wisla Krakow/Omonia Nicosia
Serif Tiraspol/Shakhtar Donetsk v Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus)
SK Tirana/Grazer AK v Ajax (Hol)
1st legs, August 13; 2nd legs, August 27

Group stage – direct qualifiers

Arsenal (Eng), Bayern Munich (Ger), Besiktas (Tur), Internazionale (Ita), Juventus (Ita), Lyon (Fra), Manchester United (Eng), Milan (Ita), Monaco (Fra), Olympiakos (Gre), Panathinaikos (Gre), FC Porto (Por), PSV Eindhoven (Hol), Real Madrid (Spa), Real Sociedad (Spa), Stuttgart (Ger)

UEFA CUP

Qual rnd draw

AIK Stockholm (Swe) v Fylkir (Ice)
APOEL Nicosia (Cyp) v Derry City (Ire)
Artmedia Petrzalka (Slk) v F91 Dudelange (Lux)
Atyrau (Kaz) v Levski Sofia (Bul)
Birkirkara (Mlt) v Ferencvaros (Hun)
Brondby (Den) v Dinamo Minsk (Bls)
Cementarnica (Mac) v Katowice (Pol)
Coleraine (Nl) v Uniao Leiria (Por)
Cwmbran Town (Wal) v Maccabi Haifa (Isr)
Dinamo Bucharest (Rom) v Metalurgs Liepaja (Lat)
Dinamo Tirana (Alb) v Lokeren (Blg)
Ekranas (Lit) v Debrecen (Hun)
Esbjerg (Den) v Santa Coloma (And)
Etzella Ettelbruck (Lux) v Kamen Ingrad (Cro)
Farum (Den) v Shirak Gyumri (Arm)
Groclin Grodzisk (Pol) v Atlantas (Lit)
FC Haka (Fin) v Hajduk Split (Cro)*
Hapoel Tel Aviv (Isr) v Banants (Arm)
Karnten (Aut) v Grindavik (Ice)
Lens (Fra) v Torpedo Kutaisi (Geo)
Levadia Maardu (Est) v Varteks (Cro)
Litex Lovech (Bul) v Zimbru Chisinau (Mol)
Malmo (Swe) v Portadown (Nl)
Manchester City (Eng) v Total Network Solutions (Wal)
Matador Puchov (Slk) v Sioni Bolnisi (Geo)
Molde (Nor) v Kl Klaksvik (Far)
MyPa (Fin) v Young Boys (Swi)
Neman (Bls) v Steaua Bucharest (Rom)
NSI Runavik (Far) v Lyn Oslo (Nor)
OB Odense (Den) v Tallinna VMK (Est)
Olimpija Ljubljana (Sln) v Shelbourne (Ire)
Publikum (Sln) v Belasica (Mac)
Red Star Belgrade (Ser) v Nistru Otaci (Mol)
Sarajevo (Bos) v Sartid (Ser)*
Torpedo Moscow (Rus) v Domagnano (SaM)
Vaduz (Lie) v Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk (Ukr)
Valletta (Mlt) v Neuchatel Xamax (Swi)*
Ventspils (Lat) v Wisla Plock (Pol)**
Viktoria Zizkov (Cze) v Zhenis Astana (Kaz)
Vllaznia (Alb) v Dundee (Sco)
Zeljeznicar (Bos) v Anorthosis Famagusta (Cyp)
1st legs, August 14; 2nd legs, August 28
**1st legs, August 12 **1st leg, August 13*

INTERTOTO CUP

1st rnd, 2nd legs

June 28: Ethnikos Achnas (Cyp) 2 Gyor (Hun) 2 *Agg 3-3. Gyor on away goals*; Gl Gotu (Far) 0 Dacia Chisinau (Mol) 1 *Dacia 5-1 on agg*; Gloria Bistrita (Rom) 5 Bangor (Wal) 2 *Gloria 6-2 on agg*; Hibernians (Mlt) 1 Allianssi (Fin) 1 *Allianssi 2-1 on agg*; KA (Ice) 1 Sloboda (Bos) 1 *Agg 2-2. Sloboda 3-2 on pens*; Kotaik (Arm) 3 Brno (Cze) 2 *Agg 3-3. Brno on away goals*; Maccabi Netanya (Isr) 3 Partizani (Alb) 1 *Agg 3-3. Partizani on away goals*; Olympiakos Nicosia (Cyp) 1 Dubnica (Slk) 4 *Dubnica 7-1 on agg*; Omagh (Nl) 1 Shakhtyor (Bls) 7 *Shakhtyor 8-1 on agg*; Orgryte (Swe) 3 Zalgiris Vilnius (Lit) 0 *Orgryte 4-1 on agg*; Pobeda (Mac) 2 Spartak Trnava (Slk) 1 *Pobeda 7-2 on agg*; WIT Georgia (Geo) 2 Pasching (Aut) 1 *Agg 2-2. Pasching on away goals*; Zagreb (Cro) 2 Koper (Sln) 2 *Koper 3-2 on agg.*
June 29: Ceahlaul Piatra (Rom) 2 Tampere United (Fin) 1 *Agg 2-2. Tampere on away goals*; Lierse (Blg) 4 Encamp (And) 1 *Lierse 7-1 on agg*; Marek (Bul) 3 Videoton (Hun) 2 *Marek 5-4 on agg*; Shamrock Rovers (Ire) 1 Odra Wodzislaw (Pol) 0 *Shamrock 3-1 on agg*; Tobol Kostanay (Kaz) 2 Polonia Warsaw (Pol) 1 *Tobol 5-1 on agg*; Trans Narva (Est) 3 OFK Belgrade (Ser) 5 *OFK 11-4 on agg*; Union Luxembourg (Lux) 1 Sutjeska (Ser) 1 *Sutjeska 4-1 on agg*; Wil 1900 (Swi) 2 Dinaburg (Lat) 0 *Wil 2-1 on agg.*

2nd rnd, 1st legs

July 5: Brescia (Ita) 2 Gloria Bistrita 1; Dacia Chisinau 2 Partizani 0; Koper 1 Dubnica 0; Marek 1 Wolfsburg (Ger) 1; Orgryte 3 Nice (Fra) 2; Pobeda 1 Pasching 1; Shakhtyor 1 Cibalia (Cro) 1; Sloboda 1 Lierse 0; Thun (Swi) 2 Brno 3; Willem II (Hol) 2 Wil 1900 1.
July 6: Akratitos (Gre) 0 Allianssi 1; Racing Santander (Spa) 1 Gyor 0; Slovan Liberec (Cze) 2 Shamrock Rovers 0; St Truiden (Blg) 0 Tobol 2; Synot (Cze) 1 OFK Belgrade 0; Tampere United 0 Sutjeska 0.

2nd rnd, 2nd legs

July 12: Brno 1 Thun 1 *Brno 4-3 on agg*; Cibalia 4 Shakhtyor 2 *Cibalia 5-3 on agg*; Dubnica 3 Koper 2 *Agg 3-3. Koper on away goals*; Gloria Bistrita 1 Brescia 1 *Brescia 3-2 on agg*; Gyor 2 Racing Santander 1 *Agg 2-2. Racing on away goals*; Lierse 5 Sloboda 1 *Lierse 5-2 on agg*; Nice 2 Orgryte 1 *Agg 4-4. Nice on away goals*; OFK Belgrade 3 Synot 3 *Synot 4-3 on agg*; Pasching 2 Pobeda 1 *Pasching 3-2 on agg*; Partizani 0 Dacia Chisinau 3 *Dacia 5-0 on agg*; Tobol 1 St Truiden 0 *Tobol 3-0 on agg*; Wil 1900 3 Willem II 1 *Wil 4-3 on agg*; Wolfsburg 2 Marek 0 *Wolfsburg 3-1 on agg.*
July 13: Allianssi 0 Akratitos 0 *Allianssi 1-0 on agg*; Shamrock Rovers 0 Slovan Liberec 2 *Liberec 4-0 on agg*; Sutjeska 0 Tampere United 1 *Tampere 1-0 on agg.*

3rd rnd, 1st legs

July 19: Aigaleo (Gre) 2 Koper 3; Dacia Chisinau 0 Schalke (Ger) 1; Guingamp (Fra) 2 Brno 1; Heerenveen (Hol) 4 Lierse 1; Nantes (Fra) 2 Wil 1900 1; Nice 0 Werder Bremen (Ger) 0; Perugia (Ita) 2 Allianssi 0; Racing Santander 0 Slovan Liberec 1; Synot 0 Wolfsburg 1; Tobol 0 Pasching 1; Villarreal (Spa) 2 Brescia 0.
July 20: Tampere United 0 Cibalia 2.

AUSTRIA

July 16: Grazer AK 1 Admira 0; Karnten 2 Austria Wien 1; Rapid Wien 4 Pasching 2.
July 17: Bregenz 1 Salzburg 0.
July 23: Admira 1 Mattersburg 1; Austria Wien 4 Bregenz 0; Pasching 1 Grazer AK 2; Salzburg 1 Rapid Wien 2; Sturm Graz 0 Karnten 0.

AUSTRIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rapid Wien	2	2	0	0	6	3	6
Grazer AK	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
Karnten	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Austria Wien	2	1	0	1	5	2	3
Bregenz	2	1	0	1	1	4	3
Mattersburg	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Sturm Graz	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Admira	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Salzburg	2	0	0	2	1	3	0
Pasching	2	0	0	2	3	6	0

NORWAY

June 29: Brann 0 Tromso 1; Rosenborg 4 Bryne 1; Aalesund 1 Stabaek 1; Sogndal 2 Bodo/Glimt 1; Odd Grenland 5 Lillestrom 0.
June 30: Lyn 1 Valerenga 1.
July 19: Molde 3 Sogndal 1.
July 20: Bodo/Glimt 1 Odd Grenland 0; Stabaek 0 Viking 2; Bryne 2 Aalesund 0; Tromso 2 Rosenborg 1; Lillestrom 2 Lyn 0.
July 21: Valerenga 0 Brann 2.

NORWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rosenborg	13	10	2	1	35	10	32
Bodo/Glimt	13	6	4	3	18	13	22
Viking	12	5	6	1	21	12	21
Sogndal	13	6	3	4	23	19	21
Stabaek	13	5	5	3	20	16	20
Odd Grenland	13	6	2	5	22	22	20
Bryne	13	5	1	7	24	22	16
Lyn	13	4	4	5	17	22	16
Lillestrom	13	3	6	4	12	21	15
Valerenga	13	3	5	5	15	16	14
Molde	12	4	2	6	16	20	14
Tromso	13	3	3	7	18	29	12
Brann	13	2	5	6	13	24	11
Aalesund	13	1	6	6	16	24	9

RUSSIA

June 27: Torpedo Moscow 0 Kryliya Sovetov 0; Uralan 1 Torpedo-Metallurg 0; Shinnik 2 Spartak-Alaniya 0; Moscow Spartak 2 Chernomorets 1; Rubin 3 Lokomotiv 1; Rotor 2 Rostov 0.
June 28: Zenit 4 CSKA 1; Dinamo 1 Saturn 1.
July 11: CSKA 2 Zenit 2; Lokomotiv 1 Rubin 1.
July 12: Torpedo-Metallurg 1 Uralan 1; Spartak-Alaniya 0 Shinnik 1; Kryliya Sovetov 4 Torpedo Moscow 2; Chernomorets 2 Moscow Spartak 3; Rostov 4 Rotor 3.
July 13: Saturn 0 Dinamo 1.
July 15: Lokomotiv 1 CSKA 3.
July 19: Torpedo Moscow 3 CSKA 2; Uralan 2 Spartak-Alaniya 1; Zenit 2 Kryliya Sovetov 2; Shinnik 3 Torpedo-Metallurg 0; Rubin 0 Saturn 0; Rotor 3 Chernomorets 0.
July 20: Dinamo 1 Lokomotiv 1; Moscow Spartak 1 Rostov 0.
July 24: CSKA 2 Uralan 0.

RUSSIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CSKA	19	12	4	3	37	22	40
Dinamo	17	8	5	4	30	18	29
Shinnik	17	7	8	2	25	14	29
Saturn	17	7	7	3	22	14	28
Zenit	17	7	5	5	22	22	26
Kryliya Sovetov	17	6	7	4	24	17	25
Rubin	17	6	7	4	22	15	25
Rostov	17	6	6	5	19	24	24
Torpedo Moscow	17	6	5	6	21	22	23
Lokomotiv	18	6	5	7	23	25	23
Moscow Spartak	17	6	4	7	22	24	22
Rotor	17	5	4	8	22	24	19
Chernomorets	17	4	6	7	19	25	18
Uralan	18	4	6	8	12	24	18
Spartak-Alaniya	17	4	0	13	10	31	12
Torpedo-Metallurg	17	2	5	10	12	21	11

SWEDEN

June 29: Landskrona 2 Elfsborg 1.
June 30: Djurgardens 3 Hammarby 0; Enkopings 0 IFK Gothenburg 1; Malmo 5 Helsingborgs 0.
July 1: AIK 0 Orebro 0.
July 2: Sundsvall 1 Osters 1; Orgryte 3 Halmstads 1.
July 6: Enkopings 3 Sundsvall 1; Halmstads 3 Osters 0; Landskrona 0 Orebro 0.
July 7: Elfsborg 1 Malmo 2; IFK Gothenburg 0 AIK 2.
July 8: Hammarby 2 Helsingborgs 0.
July 9: Djurgardens 0 Orgryte 3.
July 13: Orebro 0 Landskrona 0; Osters 0 Halmstads 3; Sundsvall 0 Enkopings 0.
July 17: AIK 0 IFK Gothenburg 2; Orgryte 0 Djurgardens 3.
July 20: Osters 1 Enkopings 1.
July 21: Helsingborgs 0 Hammarby 2; Malmo 0 Elfsborg 0; Djurgardens 3 Orebro 0.
July 23: Orgryte 3 AIK 1.
July 24: Halmstads 1 IFK Gothenburg 0.

SWEDEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Djurgardens	15	10	1	4	35	13	31
Hammarby	14	8	4	2	21	14	28
Halmstads	15	8	2	5	26	18	26
Malmo	14	7	4	3	24	13	25
AIK	15	7	3	5	23	18	24
Orgryte	15	7	2	6	23	24	23
Orebro	15	6	4	5	19	21	22
IFK Gothenburg	15	5	4	6	21	16	19
Helsingborgs	14	5	3	6	14	23	18
Elfsborg	14	4	5	5	16	21	17
Landskrona	14	3	6	5	15	19	15
Sundsvall	14	2	6	6	13	19	12
Enkopings	15	2	4	9	15	30	10
Osters	15	2	4	9	12	28	10

SWITZERLAND

July 16: Basle 2 Zurich 1; Grasshopper 0 Neuchatel Xamax 1; Servette 3 Wil 1900 1; St Gallen 1 Young Boys 4; Thun 1 Aarau 1.
July 19: Aarau 2 Grasshopper 1; Neuchatel Xamax 2 St Gallen 0; Zurich 0 Servette 1.
July 22: Wil 1900 1 Thun 1; Young Boys 2 Basle 3.

SWITZERLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Servette	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Neuchatel X	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Basle	2	2	0	0	5	3	6
Aarau	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Young Boys	2	1	0	1	6	4	3
Thun	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Wil 1900	2	0	1	1	2	4	1
Grasshopper	2	0	0	2	1	3	0
Zurich	2	0	0	2	1	3	0
St Gallen	2	0	0	2	1	6	0

UKRAINE

July 12: Metalurh Z 0 Shakhtar 3; Borysfen 0 Dnipro 2; Karpaty 4 Kryvbas 1; Zirka 1 Arsenal 0; Dynamo 5 Volyn 1; Illichivets 1 Tavriya 1; Metalurh D 2 Vorskla 2.
July 13: Obolon 1 Chornomorets 0.
July 17: Shakhtar 4 Vorskla 0; Tavriya 1 Metalurh D 1; Volyn 2 Illichivets 2; Chornomorets 1 Dynamo 0; Arsenal 2 Obolon 1; Kryvbas 1 Zirka 0; Dnipro 4 Karpaty 1; Metalurh Z 1 Borysfen 0.
July 21: Obolon 1 Kryvbas 1.
July 22: Borysfen 0 Shakhtar 1; Karpaty 1 Metalurh Z 0; Zirka 0 Dnipro 3; Dynamo 3 Arsenal 0; Illichivets 1 Chornomorets 2; Metalurh D 1 Volyn 0; Vorskla 0 Tavriya 0.

UKRAINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dnipro	3	3	0	0	9	1	9
Shakhtar	3	3	0	0	8	0	9
Dynamo	3	2	0	1	8	2	6
Karpaty	3	2	0	1	6	5	6
Chornomorets	3	2	0	1	3	2	6
Metalurh D	3	1	2	0	4	3	5
Obolon	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Kryvbas	3	1	1	1	3	5	4
Tavriya	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
Arsenal	3	1	0	2	2	5	3
Metalurh Z	3	1	0	2	1	4	3
Zirka	3	1	0	2	1	4	3
Illichivets	3	0	2	1	4	5	2
Vorskla	3	0	2	1	2	6	2
Volyn	3	0	1	2	3	8	1
Borysfen	3	0	0	3	0	4	0

SOUTH AMERICA

LIBERTADORES CUP

Final, 1st leg

June 25 - La Bombonera, Buenos Aires
Boca Juniors (Arg) 2 (Delgado 32, 83)
Santos (Bra) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Ruiz (Col)
Boca: Abbondanzieri - Ibarra, Schiavi, Burdisso, Rodriguez, Battaglia, Cascini, Cagna (Cangele 89), Delgado, Barros Schelotto (Villarreal 53), Tevez.
Santos: Fabio Costa - Reginaldo Araujo, Pereira (Andre Luis 46), Alex, Leo, Paulo Almeida, Renato, Fabiano (Nene 69), Diego, Robinho, Ricardo Oliveira.
Sent off: Reginaldo Araujo 82min.

Final, 2nd leg

July 2 - Morumbi stadium, Sao Paulo
Santos 1 (Alex 75)
Boca Juniors 3 (Tevez 21, Delgado 84, Schiavi pen 90)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 73,103. **Ref:** Larrionda (Uru)
Boca 5-1 on agg
Santos: Fabio Costa - Wellington (Nene 30), Andre Luis, Alex, Leo, Paulo Almeida, Renato, Fabiano, Diego, Robinho, Ricardo Oliveira (Douglas 67).
Boca Juniors: Abbondanzieri - Ibarra, Schiavi, Burdisso, Rodriguez, Villarreal (Jerez 89), Cascini, Battaglia, Cagna (Caneo 88), Tevez (Cangele 90), Delgado.

ARGENTINA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Friday, June 27

Racing Club 2 (Arce 27, Amarilla 46)
Chacarita Juniors 2 (Mignini 6, Delgado 14)

Saturday, June 28

Banfield 0
Rosario Central 0

San Lorenzo 2 (Luna 2, G Rodriguez 37)
Talleres Cordoba 2 (Lux 17, Real 90)

Sunday, June 29

Boca Juniors 3 (Caneo 38, Calvo 49, Bracamonte 75)
Independiente 1 (Rivas 86)

Gimnasia LP 2 (Lobos 36, Enria 88)
Huracan 0

Lanus 0
Arsenal 1 (Alvarez 11)

Newell's Old Boys 0
Colon Santa Fe 2 (Blanco 32, Carignano 78)

Olimpo 0
River Plate 2 (Zapata 80, Barrado 86)

Union Santa Fe 1 (Leguizamon 77)
Nueva Chicago 3 (Garcia 29, Carreno 48, Ceballos 74)

Velez Sarsfield 0
Estudiantes 1 (Sosa 27)

Friday, July 4

Arsenal 0
Gimnasia LP 0

Saturday, July 5

Chacarita Juniors 1 (Romero 17)
Newell's Old Boys 2 (Torres 34, Adinolfi 41)

Colon Santa Fe 1 (Imhoff 2)
Velez Sarsfield 0

Independiente 0
San Lorenzo 1 (Esquivel 36)

Nueva Chicago 0
Banfield 3 (Cervera 6, 48, Sanguinetti 20)

Talleres Cordoba 1 (Real 30)
Lanus 1 (Bustos Montoya 28)

Sunday, July 6

Estudiantes 2 (Maggiolo 11, Farias 41)
Union Santa Fe 0

Huracan 0
Olimpo 0

River Plate 1 (Cavenaghi 63)
Racing Club 3 (Romero 28, Vitali 42, Mirosevic 74)

Rosario Central 7 (Delgado 9, Figueroa 13, 20, 52, 83, 85, Messera 34)
Boca Juniors 2 (Fabbro 70, Bracamonte 87)

ARGENTINA: CLOSING – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
River Plate	19	13	4	2	43	18	43
Boca Juniors	19	12	3	4	36	23	39
Velez Sarsfield	19	12	2	5	27	12	38
Rosario Central	19	10	7	2	40	18	37
Colon Santa Fe	19	7	8	4	19	14	29
Olimpo	19	8	5	6	21	17	29
San Lorenzo	19	8	5	6	27	28	29
Estudiantes	19	7	7	5	24	18	28
Nueva Chicago	19	7	5	7	29	33	26
Gimnasia LP	19	7	5	7	21	26	26
Racing Club	19	6	7	6	26	24	25
Lanus	19	7	4	8	27	29	25
Banfield	19	6	5	8	18	20	23
Arsenal	19	4	10	5	12	13	22
Newell's OB	19	5	7	7	21	26	22
Talleres Cordoba	19	5	6	8	23	26	21
Independiente	19	4	6	9	13	25	18
Union Santa Fe	19	4	5	10	18	29	17
Chacarita Jnrs	19	2	5	12	11	24	11
Huracan	19	1	4	14	12	45	7

TOP GOALSCORERS

17 Luciano Figueroa (Rosario Central)
15 Roberto Nanni (Velez Sarsfield)
13 Fernando Cavenaghi (River Plate)
11 Cristian Castillo (Olimpo)

BOLIVIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 25: Guabira 4 Independiente 0; The Strongest 2 Jorge Wilstermann 0; Union Central 1 Iberoamericana 0.
June 26: Aurora 0 Bolivar 2; Real Potosi 3 San Jose 0.
June 28: Real Potosi 3 The Strongest 5.
June 29: Iberoamericana 2 Aurora 1; Independiente 2 Blooming 0; Oriente 6 Union Central 1; San Jose 1 Bolivar 1; Jorge Wilstermann 2 Guabira 0.
July 2: Aurora 2 Oriente 1; Union Central 8 Independiente 0.
July 3: Blooming 3 Jorge Wilstermann 0; Guabira 3 Real Potosi 1; The Strongest 3 San Jose 2.
July 6: Independiente 2 Aurora 0; Oriente 2 Bolivar 3; Real Potosi 3 Blooming 1; San Jose 1 Iberoamericana 2; The Strongest 2 Guabira 0; Jorge Wilstermann 12 Union Central 0.
July 13: Aurora 0 Jorge Wilstermann 0; Blooming 2 The Strongest 2; Bolivar 2 Independiente 1; Guabira 2 San Jose 1; Union Central 1 Real Potosi 1.
July 14: Iberoamericana 2 Oriente 0.

BOLIVIA: OPENING – FINAL*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
The Strongest	22	13	7	2	43	29	46
Bolivar	22	13	6	3	54	21	45
J Wilstermann	22	11	7	4	43	19	40
Oriente	22	10	3	9	51	37	33
Real Potosi	22	8	7	7	44	40	31
Iberoamericana	22	9	3	10	35	40	30
San Jose	22	7	4	11	29	34	25
Aurora	22	6	7	9	35	43	25
Union Central	22	5	10	7	26	39	25
Blooming	22	6	6	10	31	38	24
Guabira	22	4	6	12	21	44	18
Independiente	22	4	6	12	21	49	18

**Pending judgment on whether The Strongest used one foreigner too many in game against Jorge Wilstermann*

BRAZIL

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

June 28: Flamengo 0 Figueirense 2; Fortaleza 0 Vasco da Gama 1; Coritiba 2 Sao Caetano 0; Gremio 1 Juventude 4; Santos 4 Bahia 0.
June 29: Corinthians 1 Fluminense 0; Guarani 0 Sao Paulo 1; Criciuma 2 Paysandu 0; Vitoria 1 Atletico Paranaense 0; Parana 1 Atletico Mineiro 1; Cruzeiro 3 Internacional 2.
July 5: Vasco da Gama 1 Parana 4; Sao Paulo 1 Sao Caetano 1; Figueirense 1 Cruzeiro 0; Atletico Mineiro 3 Paysandu 2.
July 6: Juventude 1 Internacional 1; Gremio 2 Flamengo 0; Fluminense 1 Bahia 0; Guarani 3 Goias 2; Atletico Paranaense 3 Corinthians 1; Fortaleza 0 Criciuma 1; Vitoria 1 Ponte Preta 4; Santos 3 Coritiba 1.
July 9: Cruzeiro 2 Fortaleza 0; Bahia 2 Guarani 0; Sao Caetano 0 Atletico Paranaense 0; Flamengo 2 Juventude 1; Internacional 2 Vasco da Gama 1; Goias 1 Vitoria 1; Coritiba 0 Sao Paulo 2; Corinthians 1 Santos 1; Paysandu 1 Figueirense 0.
July 10: Parana 3 Gremio 1; Ponte Preta 3 Fluminense 0; Criciuma 1 Atletico Mineiro 0.
July 12: Atletico Paranaense 0 Goias 0; Vasco da Gama 0 Paysandu 2; Fortaleza 3 Internacional 0.
July 13: Gremio 0 Cruzeiro 1; Atletico Mineiro 1 Flamengo 0; Ponte Preta 1 Bahia 0; Vitoria 2 Santos 0; Corinthians 0 Coritiba 1; Criciuma 3 Juventude 0; Figueirense 4 Parana 2; Sao Caetano 0 Guarani 2; Fluminense 1 Sao Paulo 3.
July 16: Santos 2 Ponte Preta 1; Flamengo 0 Fortaleza 2; Cruzeiro 4 Vasco da Gama 1; Goias 1 Corinthians 1; Bahia 0 Sao Caetano 0; Guarani 2 Vitoria 2; Internacional 3 Atletico Mineiro 3; Juventude 1 Figueirense 2; Coritiba 3 Fluminense 0.
July 17: Paysandu 1 Gremio 1; Sao Paulo 2 Atletico Paranaense 0.
July 19: Internacional 3 Figueirense 0; Fluminense 1 Santos 4; Corinthians 1 Guarani 0; Fortaleza 4 Atletico Mineiro 3.
July 20: Juventude 2 Paysandu 0; Atletico Paranaense 2 Bahia 1; Cruzeiro 5 Parana 1; Vasco da Gama 2 Gremio 0; Ponte Preta 1 Coritiba 1; Criciuma 4 Flamengo 3; Goias 2 Sao Caetano 1; Vitoria 0 Sao Paulo 2.
July 23: Figueirense 0 Vasco da Gama 0; Atletico Mineiro 2 Juventude 1; Guarani 1 Atletico Paranaense 0; Santos 3 Goias 3; Bahia 0 Corinthians 0; Parana 4 Fortaleza 1; Paysandu 3 Cruzeiro 0.
July 24: Coritiba 1 Vitoria 1; Sao Paulo 1 Ponte Preta 2; Flamengo 2 Internacional 1; Sao Caetano 2 Fluminense 0; Gremio 0 Criciuma 2.

BRAZIL – NATIONAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cruzeiro	21	13	4	4	45	25	43
Sao Paulo	21	12	5	4	41	29	41
Santos	20	11	5	4	39	22	38
Criciuma	20	11	3	6	28	24	36
Coritiba	21	10	5	6	32	25	35
At Mineiro	21	9	7	5	38	30	34
Internacional*	21	9	5	7	30	28	34
Sao Caetano	21	7	9	5	21	20	30
Corinthians	21	7	8	6	35	26	29
Parana	20	8	4	8	39	35	28
Guarani	21	8	4	9	32	31	28
Figueirense	21	7	7	7	25	26	28
Flamengo	21	7	6	8	30	36	27
Vitoria	21	7	6	8	25	33	27
Paysandu	21	7	5	9	35	39	26
At Paranaense	20	7	4	9	28	28	25
Vasco da Gama	21	6	7	8	27	33	25
Ponte Preta*	20	7	7	6	30	29	24
Bahia	21	6	6	9	23	29	24
Fortaleza	21	6	4	11	25	34	22
Fluminense	21	6	4	11	24	37	22
Juventude*	21	4	6	11	21	38	21
Gremio	21	5	4	12	22	32	19
Goias	20	3	7	10	32	38	16

**Ponte Preta have been docked the 4pts gained from the 1-1 draw with Internacional and the 1-0 win over Juventude for fielding an ineligible player in each game; Internacional were awarded two extra points (ie the equivalent of a win), and Juventude received three points. However, the won-drawn-lost and goals records were not altered*

CHILE

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Semi-finals

*1st legs**
June 25: Huachipato 2 Cobreloa 1.
June 26: Colo Colo 3 U de Concepcion 0.

*2nd legs**
June 28: Cobreloa 2 Huachipato 0 (aet; 1-0 at 90mins).
June 29: U de Concepcion 2 Colo Colo 3.
**Best of two ties (aggregate score irrelevant); if level at one tie each, 2nd leg went to sudden-death extra-time and penalties if necessary to determine winners.*

Final

1st leg - July 3 - Monumental stadium, Santiago
Colo Colo 0
Cobreloa 0
Att: 40,000. **Ref:** Selman

2nd leg - July 6 - Municipal stadium, Calama
Cobreloa 4 (Fuentes 28, Diaz 67, Galaz 72, 87)
Colo Colo 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 17,000. **Ref:** Chandia
Sent off: Riffo 74min, Zamorano 74min, Villaseca 74min (all Colo Colo)
Cobreloa won opening championship

COLOMBIA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

July 13: At Junior 2 Indep Santa Fe 0; Tulua 0 Pereira 1; At Nacional 0 Bucaramanga 0; At Huila 1 Dep Cali 2; Centauros 2 Dep Pasto 1; America 2 Tolima 2; Envigado 0 Indep Medellin 0; Once Caldas 1 Quindio 1; Millonarios 0 Magdalena 1.
July 20: Dep Cali 1 At Nacional 0; Pereira 1 At Junior 1; Dep Pasto 2 At Huila 1; Tolima 1 Centauros 1; Quindio 1 Envigado 1; Magdalena 1 Once Caldas 0; Indep Medellin 0 America 0; Bucaramanga 2 Tulua 0; Indep Santa Fe 1 Millionarios 1.

COLOMBIA – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dep Cali	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
Magdalena	2	2	0	0	2	0	6
At Junior	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Bucaramanga	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Centauros	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Pereira	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Dep Pasto	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Tolima	2	0	2	0	3	3	2
America	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Quindio	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Envigado	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Indep Medellin	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
Millonarios	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Once Caldas	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
At Nacional	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Indep Santa Fe	2	0	1	1	1	3	1
At Huila	2	0	0	2	2	4	0
Tulua	2	0	0	2	0	3	0

ECUADOR

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 29: Aucas 3 Manta 0; Dep Cuenca 0 LDU Quito 1; Espoli 3 Tecnico Universitario 1; Dep Quito 1 Barcelona 0; Emelec 1 El Nacional 3.
July 9: Manta 1 Dep Cuenca 1; El Nacional 3 Espoli 0; LDU Quito 3 Emelec 1; Barcelona 1 Aucas 1; Tecnico Universitario 0 Dep Quito 1.
July 13: Dep Cuenca 0 Barcelona 1; El Nacional 3 LDU Quito 2; Aucas 4 Tecnico Universitario 1; Espoli 4 Dep Quito 2; Emelec 3 Manta 0.
July 18: Dep Quito 2 Aucas 1.
July 20: LDU Quito 4 Espoli 0; Tecnico Universitario 1 Dep Cuenca 1; Manta 0 El Nacional 0; Barcelona 1 Emelec 1.

ECUADOR – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
El Nacional	4	3	1	0	9	3	10
LDU Quito	4	3	0	1	10	4	9
Dep Quito	4	3	0	1	6	5	9
Aucas	4	2	1	1	9	4	7
Espoli	4	2	0	2	7	10	6
Barcelona	4	1	2	1	3	3	5
Emelec	4	1	1	2	6	7	4
Dep Cuenca	4	0	2	2	2	4	2
Manta	4	0	2	2	1	7	2
Tecnico Univ	4	0	1	3	3	9	1

PARAGUAY

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 27: Sport Colombia 3 Libertad 4.
June 29: Sol de America 1 Guarani 2; San Lorenzo 1 Olimpia 4; 12 de Octubre 1 Tacuary 0; Cerro Porteno 3 Sportivo Luqueno 3.
July 6: Olimpia 0 12 de Octubre 0.
July 12: Tacuary 1 Sport Colombia 0.
July 13: Libertad 2 Sol de America 0; Guarani 2 Sportivo Luqueno 2; San Lorenzo 0 Cerro Porteno 3.

PARAGUAY – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Libertad	4	4	0	0	13	6	12
Guarani	4	3	1	0	9	3	10
Olimpia	4	2	2	0	7	3	8
Cerro Porteno	4	2	1	1	8	5	7
Sportivo Luqueno	4	1	3	0	7	6	6
Tacuary	4	1	2	1	4	4	5
12 de Octubre	4	1	1	2	2	4	4
Sol de America	4	0	1	3	1	5	1
San Lorenzo	4	0	1	3	5	13	1
Sport Colombia	4	0	0	4	4	11	0

PERU

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 29: Alianza Lima 2 Melgar 0; Sporting Cristal 1 Alianza Atletico 0; At Universidad 1 Sport Boys 0; Coronel Bolognesi 2 Dep Wanka 2; Union Huaral 3 Universitario 1; Cienciano 3 Estudiantes 0.

PERU: OPENING – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sporting Cristal	22	15	4	3	50	20	49
Alianza Lima	22	14	4	4	40	20	46
Coronel Bolognesi	22	9	8	5	30	32	35
Cienciano	22	10	4	8	31	22	34
Sport Boys	22	8	7	7	34	28	31
Alianza Atletico	22	7	8	7	29	28	29
Union Huaral	22	8	5	9	28	40	29
Universitario	22	7	7	8	32	35	28
Melgar	22	5	7	10	20	30	22
Estudiantes	22	6	3	13	23	35	21
Dep Wanka	22	4	7	11	22	31	19
At Universidad	22	4	6	12	25	43	18

URUGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 28: Nacional 1 Villa Espanola 1; Wanderers 2 Fenix 3; Plaza 0 Danubio 4.
June 29: Dep Colonia 1 Juventud 2; Bella Vista M 1 Tacuarembo 2; Central Espanol 1 River Plate 1; Cerro 1 Liverpool 2; Penarol 1 Miramar Misiones 1; Dep Maldonado 1 Defensor 0.

URUGUAY: OPENING – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional	17	14	2	1	34	9	44
Penarol	17	12	2	3	43	20	38
Danubio	17	10	4	3	34	19	34
Wanderers	17	10	3	4	40	28	33
Fenix	17	9	2	6	41	38	29
Cerro	17	8	4	5	25	21	28
Dep Maldonado	17	8	4	5	24	26	28
Defensor	17	8	3	6	28	23	27
Liverpool	17	8	3	6	24	24	27
Miramar Misiones	17	6	4	7	28	27	22
Bella Vista M	17	6	3	8	23	22	21
Central Espanol	17	6	3	8	15	22	21
Tacuarembo	17	5	5	7	25	26	20
Villa Espanola	17	4	5	8	31	37	17
River Plate	17	3	4	10	18	27	13
Plaza	17	2	6	9	17	26	12
Dep Colonia	17	2	3	12	13	36	9
Juventud	17	1	2	14	11	43	5

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

July 18: Central Espanol 2 Dep Maldonado 0.
July 19: Bella Vista M 0 Wanderers 1.
July 20: Danubio 1 Juventud 0; River Plate 3 Dep Colonia 2; Miramar Misiones 1 Liverpool 1; Villa Espanola 1 Cerro 2; Plaza 2 Fenix 2; Defensor 0 Penarol 2.

URUGUAY – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Central Espanol	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Penarol	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
River Plate	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
Cerro	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Danubio	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Wanderers	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Fenix	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Plaza	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Liverpool	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Miramar Misiones	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Nacional	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tacuarembo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dep Colonia	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
Villa Espanola	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Bella Vista M	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Juventud	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Defensor	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Dep Maldonado	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

CENTRAL & NORTH AMERICA

UNITED STATES

June 28: New England Revolution 3 Colorado Rapids 2; Columbus Crew 3 DC United 0; Chicago Fire 2 MetroStars 1 (aet); Los Angeles Galaxy 3 Dallas Burn 0; San Jose Earthquakes 0 Kansas City Wizards 0 (aet).
July 2: MetroStars 4 San Jose Earthquakes 4 (aet); Dallas Burn 1 DC United 3.
July 4: Colorado Rapids 3 Kansas City Wizards 2; Los Angeles Galaxy 2 New England Revolution 2 (aet).
July 5: DC United 2 MetroStars 3 (aet); Columbus Crew 0 Dallas Burn 0 (aet); San Jose Earthquakes 0 Chicago Fire 0 (aet).
July 9: Los Angeles Galaxy 0 Colorado Rapids 1.
July 12: New England Revolution 3 MetroStars 3 (aet); Chicago Fire 1 DC United 2; Kansas City Wizards 5 Dallas Burn 1; San Jose Earthquakes 0 Colorado Rapids 2.
July 16: New England Revolution 1 Dallas Burn 2.
July 19: DC United 1 San Jose Earthquakes 2; Columbus Crew 0 Kansas City Wizards 1; Chicago Fire 3 New England Revolution 1; Dallas Burn 1 MetroStars 2 (aet).
July 23: Columbus Crew 1 New England Revolution 1 (aet).

USA – EASTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MetroStars	16	8	4	4	27	22	28
Chicago Fire	15	7	4	4	27	20	25
New England	17	5	7	5	28	29	22
Columbus Crew	16	5	5	6	20	20	20
DC United	16	4	6	6	20	20	18

USA – WESTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kansas City	16	7	6	3	32	23	27
San Jose	16	7	6	3	22	20	27
Colorado Rapids	16	5	3	8	19	26	18
LA Galaxy	16	3	7	6	17	18	16
Dallas Burn	16	3	4	9	18	32	13

LEADING GOALSCORERS

10 Taylor Twellman (New England Revolution)
9 Ante Razov (Chicago Fire)
8 Preki (Kansas City Wizards)
8 Carlos Ruiz (LA Galaxy)

AFRICA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group stage match schedule

Group A

Aug 9: ASEC Abidjan (IvC) v Ismaili (Egy)
Aug 10: Enyimba (Nig) v Simba (Tan)
Aug 22: Ismaili v Enyimba
Aug 23: Simba v ASEC Abidjan
Sep 6: Simba v Ismaili
Sep 7: Enyimba v ASEC Abidjan
Sep 19: Ismaili v Simba
Sep 21: ASEC Abidjan v Enyimba
Oct 3: Ismaili v ASEC Abidjan
Oct 4: Simba v Enyimba
Oct 19: ASEC Abidjan v Simba
Enyimba v Ismaili

Group B

Aug 9: Esperance (Tun) v Canon Yaounde (Cam)
Aug 10: AS Aviacao (Ang) v USM Alger (Alg)
Aug 22: USM Alger v Esperance
Aug 24: Canon Yaounde v AS Aviacao
Sep 5: USM Alger v Canon Yaounde
Sep 7: AS Aviacao v Esperance
Sep 20: Esperance v AS Aviacao
Sep 21: Canon Yaounde v USM Alger
Oct 3: USM Alger v AS Aviacao
Oct 5: Canon Yaounde v Esperance
Oct 18: AS Aviacao v Canon Yaounde
Esperance v USM Alger

Top two from each group qualify for semi-finals

CUP-WINNERS CUP

Quarter-finals draw

Africa Sports (IvC) v Etoile Sahel (Tun)
Asante Kotoko (Gha) v APR FC (Rwa)
Baladeyet Al Mehalla (Egy) v Julius Berger (Nig)
Power Dynamos (Zam) v Wydad Casablanca (Mor)
1st legs, September 7; 2nd legs, September 21

CAF CUP

Quarter-finals draw

Black Rhinos (Zim) v Raja Casablanca (Mor)
Club Africain (Tun) v Green Buffaloes (Zam)
Enugu Rangers (Nig) v Al Ahly (Egy)
JS Kabylie (Alg) v Cotonsport (Cam)
1st legs, September 7; 2nd legs, September 21

MOROCCO

MOROCCO – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hassania Agadir	30	14	12	4	32	12	54
Raja Casablanca	30	13	13	4	36	18	52
Wydad Casablanca	30	13	13	4	25	15	52
COD Meknes	30	14	10	6	25	16	52
MAS Fes	30	13	10	7	34	20	49
Olympique Kh'bga	30	12	8	10	27	24	44
Chabab Moh'dia	30	8	13	9	23	26	37
Jeunesse Sportive	30	7	13	10	25	32	34
FAR Rabat	30	7	12	11	27	29	33
Tihad Sportif	30	6	15	9	23	27	33
Ittihad Zemmouri	30	6	15	9	22	30	33
Renaissance	30	7	11	12	19	26	32
Kawkab Mar'kech	30	7	11	12	25	34	32
KAC Kenitra	30	6	13	11	20	24	31
Ittihad Ryadi	30	7	9	14	22	38	30
FUS Rabat	30	5	12	13	13	27	27

SENEGAL

SENEGAL – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jeanne d'Arc	26	14	9	3	28	11	51
ASC Diaraf	26	12	11	3	28	11	47
AS Douanes	26	11	11	4	24	11	44
DUC	26	9	12	5	24	19	39
ASEC Ndiambour	26	11	6	9	19	18	39
US Rail	26	7	12	7	20	20	33
CSS	26	6	13	7	13	11	31
Linguere	26	7	9	10	20	22	30
ASC HLM	26	7	9	10	17	21	30
Sonacos	26	6	12	8	16	21	30
Stade Mbour	26	6	11	9	14	20	29
ASC Police	26	5	11	10	16	25	26
Port Autonome	26	4	13	9	7	16	25
ASFA	26	4	7	15	9	29	19

TUNISIA

TUNISIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Esperance	22	18	3	1	47	17	57
Etoile Sahel	22	11	5	6	32	18	38
Club Africain	22	10	5	7	23	20	35
CS Sfaxien	22	8	7	7	28	23	31
Stade Tunisien	22	8	6	8	28	27	30
US Monastir	22	6	11	5	23	21	29
CS Hammam-Lif	22	8	5	9	24	28	29
CA Bizertin	22	7	7	8	21	22	28
AS Marsa	22	7	4	11	18	28	25
Olympique Beja	22	6	6	10	18	23	24
AS Djerba	22	5	3	14	21	41	18
ES Zarzis	22	4	6	12	15	30	18

ASIA

IRAN

IRAN – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sepahan	26	16	4	6	47	27	52
Paas	26	13	6	7	37	23	45
Pirouzi	26	11	11	4	30	21	44
Fajr	26	11	9	6	28	21	42
Peykan	26	10	7	9	27	24	37
Saipa	26	9	8	9	29	30	35
Foolad	26	9	7	10	34	36	34
Zob-Ahan	26	10	4	12	22	29	34
Esteghlal (Tehran)	26	8	8	10	32	30	32
Bargh	26	9	5	12	28	38	32
Esteghlal Ahvaz	26	6	10	10	24	30	28
AbooMoslem	26	5	11	10	22	26	26
Sanat-Naft	26	6	8	12	25	34	26
Malavan	26	6	8	12	17	34	26

JAPAN

FIRST STAGE

July 5: Kashima Antlers 5 Jubilo Iwata 2; Urawa Reds 2 Oita Trinita 1; Kashiwa Reysol 0 JEF United Ichihara 2; Shimizu S-Pulse 0 Yokohama F Marinos 1; Nagoya Grampus Eight 1 Kyoto Purple Sanga 1; Vissel Kobe 4 Gamba Osaka 3.
July 6: Cerezo Osaka 0 Tokyo Verdy 1969 2; FC Tokyo 2 Vegalta Sendai 0.
July 12: Urawa Reds 0 FC Tokyo 1; JEF United Ichihara 5 Vegalta Sendai 1; Tokyo Verdy 1969 3 Kashiwa Reysol 1; Yokohama F Marinos 2 Kyoto Purple Sanga 1; Shimizu S-Pulse 2 Kashima Antlers 0; Vissel Kobe 0 Nagoya Grampus Eight 3.
July 13: Oita Trinita 0 Jubilo Iwata 4; Gamba Osaka 0 Cerezo Osaka 2.
July 19: Vegalta Sendai 3 Tokyo Verdy 1969 3; Kashima Antlers 3 Vissel Kobe 3; FC Tokyo 0 Shimizu S-Pulse 0; Nagoya Grampus Eight 1 Gamba Osaka 1; Kyoto Purple Sanga 0 Oita Trinita 2; Cerezo Osaka 1 Yokohama F Marinos 4.
July 20: Jubilo Iwata 2 JEF United Ichihara 2; Kashiwa Reysol 1 Urawa Reds 1.

JAPAN – 1ST STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
JEF United	13	8	3	2	32	15	27
Yokohama FM	13	8	2	3	24	15	26
Jubilo Iwata	13	7	4	2	32	17	25
Grampus Eight	13	5	8	0	17	10	23
Kashima Antlers	13	7	2	4	22	17	23
FC Tokyo	13	6	4	3	13	10	22
Cerezo Osaka	13	6	1	6	26	28	19
Urawa Reds	13	5	3	5	20	20	18
Kashiwa Reysol	13	5	3	5	17	17	18
Vissel Kobe	13	5	1	7	18	23	16
Tokyo Verdy	13	5	1	7	22	28	16
Shimizu S-Pulse	13	4	2	7	17	18	14
Gamba Osaka	13	3	4	6	22	25	13
Vegalta Sendai	13	3	3	7	14	23	12
Oita Trinita	13	3	2	8	12	21	11
Kyoto PS	13	2	1	10	11	32	7

SOUTH KOREA

June 28: Bucheon 0 Gwangju 2; Pohang 2 Songnam 0; Busan 2 Daegu 2.
June 29: Chonbuk 2 Suwon 2; Chunnam 1 Daejeon 0; Anyang 1 Ulsan 2.
July 2: Busan 2 Anyang 1; Ulsan 3 Chunnam 2; Daejeon 2 Chonbuk 2; Suwon 1 Pohang 1; Songnam 1 Bucheon 0; Daegu 2 Gwangju 1.
July 5: Bucheon 1 Suwon 2; Pohang 0 Daejeon 0.
July 6: Gwangju 0 Songnam 1; Chonbuk 1 Ulsan 2; Anyang 5 Daegu 0.
July 9: Anyang 1 Chunnam 1; Busan 1 Chonbuk 1; Ulsan 0 Pohang 0; Daejeon 1 Bucheon 0; Suwon 1 Gwangju 0; Daegu 2 Songnam 3.
July 12: Songnam 2 Suwon 1; Gwangju 1 Daejeon 1; Bucheon 0 Ulsan 2; Pohang 1 Busan 0; Chonbuk 1 Anyang 2; Daegu 1 Chunnam 2.

SOUTH KOREA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Songnam	20	13	4	3	35	19	43
Ulsan	21	13	4	4	35	19	43
Anyang	21	8	9	4	37	27	33
Daejeon	21	9	6	6	21	21	33
Chonbuk	21	8	8	5	34	29	32
Pohang	21	8	6	7	24	23	30
Suwon	21	7	9	5	23	22	30
Chunnam	20	7	8	5	27	24	29
Busan	19	5	5	9	19	27	20
Gwangju	21	5	4	12	22	32	19
Daegu	21	3	8	10	17	31	17
Bucheon	21	0	5	16	14	34	5

THAILAND

THAILAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Krung Thai Bank	18	10	6	2	29	15	36
BEC Tero Sasana	18	10	5	3	31	11	35
Port Authority	18	10	3	5	25	19	33
Bangkok Bank	18	6	10	2	31	26	28
Royal Air Force	18	7	2	9	26	29	23
Osotspa	18	5	8	5	19	17	23
Sinthana	18	4	10	4	21	23	22
Tobacco M'poly	18	5	6	7	22	25	21
Telephone Org	18	2	5	11	18	29	11
Christian College	18	2	3	13	16	44	9

AUSTRIA

Wed, July 16, 2003

Grazer AK v Admira
Karnten v Austria Wien
Rapid Wien v Pasching

Thu, July 17

Bregenz v Salzburg

Wed, July 23

Admira v Mattersburg
Austria Wien v Bregenz
Pasching v Grazer AK
Salzburg v Rapid Wien
Sturm Graz v Karnten

Sat, July 26

Mattersburg v Sturm Graz

Wed, July 30

Bregenz v Sturm Graz
Grazer AK v Austria Wien
Mattersburg v Karnten
Pasching v Salzburg
Rapid Wien v Admira

Wed, August 6

Admira v Pasching
Austria Wien v Mattersburg
Karnten v Bregenz
Salzburg v Grazer AK
Sturm Graz v Rapid Wien

Mon, August 18

Admira v Salzburg
Grazer AK v Karnten
Mattersburg v Bregenz
Pasching v Sturm Graz
Rapid Wien v Austria Wien

Sat, August 23

Austria Wien v Admira
Bregenz v Grazer AK
Karnten v Pasching
Mattersburg v Rapid Wien
Sturm Graz v Salzburg

Sat, August 30

Admira v Sturm Graz
Grazer AK v Mattersburg
Pasching v Bregenz
Rapid Wien v Karnten
Salzburg v Austria Wien

Wed, September 10

Austria Wien v Pasching
Bregenz v Rapid Wien
Karnten v Admira
Mattersburg v Salzburg
Sturm Graz v Grazer AK

Sat, September 13

Admira v Bregenz
Pasching v Mattersburg
Rapid Wien v Grazer AK
Salzburg v Karnten
Sturm Graz v Austria Wien

Sat, September 20

Austria Wien v Sturm Graz
Bregenz v Admira
Grazer AK v Rapid Wien
Karnten v Salzburg
Mattersburg v Pasching

Sat, September 27

Admira v Grazer AK
Austria Wien v Karnten
Pasching v Rapid Wien
Salzburg v Bregenz
Sturm Graz v Mattersburg

Sat, October 4

Bregenz v Austria Wien
Grazer AK v Pasching
Karnten v Sturm Graz
Mattersburg v Admira
Rapid Wien v Salzburg

Sat, October 18

Admira v Rapid Wien
Austria Wien v Grazer AK
Karnten v Mattersburg
Salzburg v Pasching
Sturm Graz v Bregenz

Sat, October 25

Bregenz v Karnten
Grazer AK v Salzburg
Mattersburg v Austria Wien
Pasching v Admira
Rapid Wien v Sturm Graz

Wed, October 29

Austria Wien v Rapid Wien
Bregenz v Mattersburg
Karnten v Grazer AK
Salzburg v Admira
Sturm Graz v Pasching

Sat, November 1

Admira v Austria Wien
Grazer AK v Bregenz
Pasching v Karnten
Rapid Wien v Mattersburg
Salzburg v Sturm Graz

Sat, November 8

Austria Wien v Salzburg
Bregenz v Pasching
Karnten v Rapid Wien
Mattersburg v Grazer AK
Sturm Graz v Admira

Sat, November 22

Admira v Karnten
Grazer AK v Sturm Graz
Pasching v Austria Wien
Rapid Wien v Bregenz
Salzburg v Mattersburg

Sat, November 29

Austria Wien v Admira
Bregenz v Grazer AK
Karnten v Salzburg
Mattersburg v Rapid Wien
Sturm Graz v Pasching

Sat, December 6

Admira v Mattersburg
Grazer AK v Karnten
Pasching v Bregenz
Rapid Wien v Sturm Graz
Salzburg v Austria Wien

Sat, February 21, 2004

Austria Wien v Pasching
Bregenz v Rapid Wien
Karnten v Admira
Mattersburg v Grazer AK
Sturm Graz v Salzburg

Sat, February 28

Admira v Sturm Graz
Grazer AK v Austria Wien
Mattersburg v Bregenz
Pasching v Salzburg
Rapid Wien v Karnten

Sat, March 6

Austria Wien v Rapid Wien
Karnten v Bregenz
Pasching v Admira
Salzburg v Grazer AK
Sturm Graz v Mattersburg

Sat, March 13

Admira v Salzburg
Bregenz v Austria Wien
Grazer AK v Sturm Graz
Mattersburg v Karnten
Rapid Wien v Pasching

Wed, March 17

Admira v Rapid Wien
Austria Wien v Mattersburg
Pasching v Grazer AK
Salzburg v Bregenz
Sturm Graz v Karnten

Sat, March 20

Bregenz v Sturm Graz
Grazer AK v Admira
Karnten v Austria Wien
Mattersburg v Pasching
Rapid Wien v Salzburg

Sat, March 27

Admira v Bregenz
Austria Wien v Sturm Graz
Grazer AK v Rapid Wien
Pasching v Karnten
Salzburg v Mattersburg

Sat, April 3

Bregenz v Admira
Karnten v Pasching
Mattersburg v Salzburg
Rapid Wien v Grazer AK
Sturm Graz v Austria Wien

Wed, April 7

Admira v Austria Wien
Grazer AK v Bregenz
Pasching v Sturm Graz
Rapid Wien v Mattersburg
Salzburg v Karnten

Wed, April 14

Austria Wien v Salzburg
Bregenz v Pasching
Karnten v Grazer AK
Mattersburg v Admira
Sturm Graz v Rapid Wien

Sat, April 17

Admira v Karnten
Grazer AK v Mattersburg
Pasching v Austria Wien
Rapid Wien v Bregenz
Salzburg v Sturm Graz

Sat, April 24

Austria Wien v Grazer AK
Bregenz v Mattersburg
Karnten v Rapid Wien
Salzburg v Pasching
Sturm Graz v Admira

Sat, May 1

Admira v Pasching
Bregenz v Karnten
Grazer AK v Salzburg
Mattersburg v Sturm Graz
Rapid Wien v Austria Wien

Sat, May 8

Austria Wien v Bregenz
Karnten v Mattersburg
Pasching v Rapid Wien
Salzburg v Admira
Sturm Graz v Grazer AK

Sat, May 15

Bregenz v Salzburg
Grazer AK v Pasching
Karnten v Sturm Graz
Mattersburg v Austria Wien
Rapid Wien v Admira

Thu, May 20

Admira v Grazer AK
Austria Wien v Karnten
Pasching v Mattersburg
Salzburg v Rapid Wien
Sturm Graz v Bregenz

BELGIUM

Fri, August 8, 2003

Club Brugge v Genk

Sat, August 9

Anderlecht v Royal Antwerp
Westerlo v La Louviere
Charleroi v Lierse
Germinal Beerschot v Mons
Lokeren v St Truiden

Sun, August 10

Mouscron v Standard
Beveren v Gent
Heusden-Zolder v Cercle Brugge

Sat, August 16

Beveren v St Truiden
Standard v Lokeren
Mons v Mouscron
Lierse v Germinal Beerschot
Genk v Charleroi
Cercle Brugge v Club Brugge
Gent v Anderlecht

Sun, August 17

La Louviere v Heusden-Zolder
Royal Antwerp v Westerlo

Fri, August 22

Heusden-Zolder v Royal Antwerp
Club Brugge v La Louviere

Sat, August 23

Mouscron v Lierse
Standard v Mons
Anderlecht v St Truiden
Westerlo v Gent
Lokeren v Beveren

Sun, August 24

Charleroi v Cercle Brugge
Germinal Beerschot v Genk

Sat, August 30

St Truiden v Westerlo
Beveren v Anderlecht
Mons v Lokeren
Lierse v Standard
La Louviere v Charleroi
Royal Antwerp v Club Brugge
Gent v Heusden-Zolder

Sun, August 31

Genk v Mouscron
Cercle Brugge v Germinal Beerschot

Fri, September 12

Heusden-Zolder v St Truiden
Standard v Genk

Sat, September 13

Westerlo v Beveren
Club Brugge v Gent
Charleroi v Royal Antwerp
Germinal Beerschot v La Louviere
Lokeren v Anderlecht

Sun, September 14

Mouscron v Cercle Brugge
Mons v Lierse

Sat, September 20

St Truiden v Club Brugge
Beveren v Heusden-Zolder
Genk v Mons
Cercle Brugge v Standard
La Louviere v Mouscron
Royal Antwerp v Germinal Beerschot
Gent v Charleroi

Sun, September 21

Anderlecht v Westerlo
Lierse v Lokeren

Fri, September 26

Heusden-Zolder v Anderlecht

Sat, September 27

Mouscron v Royal Antwerp
Standard v La Louviere
Mons v Cercle Brugge
Lierse v Genk
Club Brugge v Beveren
Charleroi v St Truiden
Germinal Beerschot v Gent

Sun, September 28

Lokeren v Westerlo

Sat, October 4

Beveren v Charleroi
Anderlecht v Club Brugge
Westerlo v Heusden-Zolder
Genk v Lokeren
La Louviere v Mons
Gent v Mouscron

Sun, October 5

St Truiden v Germinal Beerschot
Cercle Brugge v Lierse
Royal Antwerp v Standard

Sat, October 18

Mouscron v St Truiden
Mons v Royal Antwerp
Lierse v La Louviere
Club Brugge v Westerlo
Charleroi v Anderlecht
Germinal Beerschot v Beveren
Lokeren v Heusden-Zolder

Sun, October 19

Standard v Gent
Genk v Cercle Brugge

Fri, October 24

Heusden-Zolder v Club Brugge

Sat, October 25

St Truiden v Standard
Beveren v Mouscron
Anderlecht v Germinal Beerschot
La Louviere v Genk
Royal Antwerp v Lierse
Gent v Mons

Sun, October 26

Westerlo v Charleroi
Cercle Brugge v Lokeren

Sat, November 1

Mouscron v Anderlecht
Standard v Beveren
Mons v St Truiden
Lierse v Gent
Genk v Royal Antwerp
Germinal Beerschot v Westerlo
Lokeren v Club Brugge

Sun, November 2

Cercle Brugge v La Louviere
Charleroi v Heusden-Zolder

Fri, November 7

Heusden-Zolder v Germinal Beerschot

Sat, November 8

St Truiden v Lierse
Anderlecht v Standard
Westerlo v Mouscron
La Louviere v Lokeren
Royal Antwerp v Cercle Brugge
Gent v Genk

Sun, November 9

Beveren v Mons
Club Brugge v Charleroi

Sat, November 22

Mouscron v Heusden-Zolder
Standard v Westerlo
Mons v Anderlecht
Lierse v Beveren
Genk v St Truiden
Germinal Beerschot v Club Brugge
Lokeren v Charleroi

Sun, November 23

Cercle Brugge v Gent
La Louviere v Royal Antwerp

Sat, November 29

Beveren v Genk
Anderlecht v Lierse
Westerlo v Mons
Club Brugge v Mouscron
Charleroi v Germinal Beerschot
Royal Antwerp v Lokeren
Gent v La Louviere

Sun, November 30

St Truiden v Cercle Brugge
Heusden-Zolder v Standard

Sat, December 6

Mouscron v Charleroi
Standard v Club Brugge
Lierse v Westerlo
Genk v Anderlecht
La Louviere v St Truiden
Royal Antwerp v Gent
Lokeren v Germinal Beerschot

Sun, December 7

Mons v Heusden-Zolder
Cercle Brugge v Beveren

Fri, December 12

Heusden-Zolder v Lierse

Sat, December 13

St Truiden v Royal Antwerp
Beveren v La Louviere
Westerlo v Genk
Club Brugge v Mons
Charleroi v Standard
Germinal Beerschot v Mouscron

Sun, December 14

Anderlecht v Cercle Brugge
Lokeren v Gent

Sat, December 20

Mouscron v Lokeren
Mons v Charleroi
Lierse v Club Brugge
Genk v Heusden-Zolder
La Louviere v Anderlecht
Royal Antwerp v Beveren
Gent v St Truiden

Sun, December 21

Standard v Germinal Beerschot
Cercle Brugge v Westerlo

Close encounter...Royal Antwerp v Anderlecht

Sat, January 17, 2004

Standard v Mouscron
Gent v Beveren
La Louviere v Westerlo
Genk v Club Brugge
Lierse v Charleroi
Mons v Germinal Beerschot
St Truiden v Lokeren

Sun, January 18

Royal Antwerp v Anderlecht
Cercle Brugge v Heusden-Zolder

Fri, January 23

Heusden-Zolder v La Louviere

Sat, January 24

Beveren v St Truiden
Lokeren v Standard
Mouscron v Mons
Germinal Beerschot v Lierse
Club Brugge v Cercle Brugge
Anderlecht v Gent

Sun, January 25

Charleroi v Genk
Westerlo v Royal Antwerp

Sat, January 31

Mons v Standard
St Truiden v Anderlecht
Gent v Westerlo
Royal Antwerp v Heusden-Zolder
La Louviere v Club Brugge
Genk v Germinal Beerschot
Beveren v Lokeren

Sun, February 1

Lierse v Mouscron
Cercle Brugge v Charleroi

Fri, February 6

Heusden-Zolder v Gent

Sat, February 7

Westerlo v St Truiden
Anderlecht v Beveren
Lokeren v Mons
Standard v Lierse
Germinal Beerschot v Cercle Brugge
Charleroi v La Louviere

Sun, February 8

Club Brugge v Royal Antwerp
Mouscron v Genk

Sat, February 14

Genk v Standard
Lierse v Mons
Beveren v Westerlo
St Truiden v Heusden-Zolder
Royal Antwerp v Charleroi
La Louviere v Germinal Beerschot
Anderlecht v Lokeren

Sun, February 15

Cercle Brugge v Mouscron
Gent v Club Brugge

Fri, February 20

Heusden-Zolder v Beveren

Sat, February 21

Club Brugge v St Truiden
Westerlo v Anderlecht
Lokeren v Lierse
Standard v Cercle Brugge
Mouscron v La Louviere
Charleroi v Gent

Sun, February 22

Mons v Genk
Germinal Beerschot v Royal Antwerp

Sat, February 28

Royal Antwerp v Mouscron
La Louviere v Standard
Genk v Lierse
Anderlecht v Heusden-Zolder
Beveren v Club Brugge
St Truiden v Charleroi
Gent- Germinal Beerschot

Sun, February 29

Cercle Brugge v Mons
Westerlo v Lokeren

Fri, March 5

Heusden-Zolder v Westerlo

Sat, March 6

Charleroi v Beveren
Club Brugge v Anderlecht
Lokeren v Genk
Lierse v Cercle Brugge
Mons v La Louviere
Mouscron v Gent

Sun, March 7

Germinal Beerschot v St Truiden
Standard v Royal Antwerp

Fri, March 12

Heusden-Zolder v Lokeren

Sat, March 13

St Truiden v Mouscron
Royal Antwerp v Mons
La Louviere v Lierse
Westerlo v Club Brugge
Anderlecht v Charleroi
Beveren v Germinal Beerschot

Sun, March 14

Gent v Standard
Cercle Brugge v Genk

Sat, March 20

Standard v St Truiden
Mouscron v Beveren
Germinal Beerschot v Anderlecht
Club Brugge v Heusden-Zolder
Lokeren v Cercle Brugge
Genk v La Louviere
Mons v Gent

Sun, March 21

Charleroi v Westerlo
Lierse v Royal Antwerp

Sat, April 3

Anderlecht v Mouscron
Beveren v Standard
St Truiden v Mons
Gent v Lierse
Royal Antwerp v Genk
La Louviere v Cercle Brugge
Westerlo v Germinal Beerschot
Club Brugge v Lokeren

Sun, April 4

Heusden-Zolder v Charleroi

Sat, April 10

Lierse v St Truiden
Mons v Beveren
Standard v Anderlecht
Germinal Beerschot v Heusden-Zolder
Charleroi v Club Brugge
Lokeren v La Louviere
Cercle Brugge v Royal Antwerp

Sun, April 11

Mouscron v Westerlo
Genk v Gent

Fri, April 16

Heusden-Zolder v Mouscron

Sat, April 17

Westerlo v Standard
Beveren v Lierse
St Truiden v Genk
Gent v Cercle Brugge
Royal Antwerp v La Louviere
Charleroi v Lokeren

Sun, April 18

Anderlecht v Mons
Club Brugge v Germinal Beerschot

Sat, April 24

Cercle Brugge v St Truiden
Genk v Beveren
Lierse v Anderlecht
Mons v Westerlo
Standard v Heusden-Zolder
Mouscron v Club Brugge
Germinal Beerschot v Charleroi

Sun, April 25

Lokeren v Royal Antwerp
La Louviere v Gent

Fri, April 30

Heusden-Zolder v Mons

Sat, May 1

Charleroi v Mouscron
Club Brugge v Standard
Westerlo v Lierse
Anderlecht v Genk
Gent v Royal Antwerp
Germinal Beerschot v Lokeren

Sun, May 2

Beveren v Cercle Brugge
St Truiden v La Louviere

Wed, May 5

Royal Antwerp v St Truiden
La Louviere v Beveren
Cercle Brugge v Anderlecht
Genk v Westerlo
Lierse v Heusden-Zolder
Mons v Club Brugge
Standard v Charleroi
Mouscron v Germinal Beerschot
Gent v Lokeren

Sat, May 15

Lokeren v Mouscron
Germinal Beerschot v Standard
Charleroi v Mons
Club Brugge v Lierse
Heusden-Zolder v Genk
Westerlo v Cercle Brugge
Anderlecht v La Louviere
Beveren v Royal Antwerp
St Truiden v Gent

DENMARK

Sat, July 26, 2003

AaB v FC Copenhagen

Sun, July 27

Brondby v Herfolge
Esbjerg v AGF
Nordsjaelland v AB
Midtjylland v Viborg
OB v Frem

Sat, August 2

FC Copenhagen v OB

Sun, August 3

AB v AaB
Herfolge v Midtjylland
Frem v Brondby
Viborg v Esbjerg
AGF v Nordsjaelland

Sun, August 10

AaB v Frem
Brondby v AGF
Esbjerg v FC Copenhagen
Nordsjaelland v OB
Herfolge v Viborg
Midtjylland v AB

Sun, August 17

AB v Esbjerg
OB v AaB
FC Copenhagen v Nordsjaelland
Frem v Herfolge
Viborg v Brondby
AGF v Midtjylland

Sun, August 24

Brondby v FC Copenhagen
Esbjerg v AaB
Nordsjaelland v Frem
Herfolge v AB
Midtjylland v OB
Viborg v AGF

Sun, August 31

AaB v Herfolge
Esbjerg v Midtjylland
Nordsjaelland v Brondby
OB v Viborg
FC Copenhagen v AGF
Frem v AB

Sun, September 14

AaB v Nordsjaelland
AB v Brondby
OB v Esbjerg
FC Copenhagen v Midtjylland
Frem v Viborg
AGF v Herfolge

Wed, September 17

Brondby v AaB
Esbjerg v Frem
Herfolge v OB
Midtjylland v Nordsjaelland
Viborg v FC Copenhagen
AGF v AB

Sun, September 21

AaB v Midtjylland
Nordsjaelland v Esbjerg
AB v Viborg
OB v Brondby
FC Copenhagen v Herfolge
Frem v AGF

Sun, September 28

AaB v AGF
Brondby v Midtjylland
Esbjerg v Herfolge
Nordsjaelland v Viborg
OB v AB
FC Copenhagen v Frem

Sun, October 5

Brondby v Esbjerg
AB v FC Copenhagen
Herfolge v Nordsjaelland
Midtjylland v Frem
Viborg v AaB
AGF v OB

Sun, October 19

AB v AaB
Midtjylland v Herfolge
FC Copenhagen v OB
Frem v Nordsjaelland
Viborg v Esbjerg
AGF v Brondby

Wed, October 22

AaB v Frem
Brondby v Viborg
Esbjerg v AB
Nordsjaelland v Midtjylland
Herfolge v FC Copenhagen
OB v AGF

Sun, October 26

AB v Brondby
Herfolge v OB
Midtjylland v AaB
FC Copenhagen v Nordsjaelland
Frem v Esbjerg
Viborg v AGF

Wed, October 29

AaB v FC Copenhagen
Brondby v Frem
Esbjerg v Midtjylland
Nordsjaelland v Herfolge
OB v Viborg
AGF v AB

Sun, November 2

Nordsjaelland v OB
AB v Viborg
Herfolge v AaB
Midtjylland v Brondby
FC Copenhagen v Esbjerg
Frem v AGF

Sun, November 9

AaB v Nordsjaelland
Brondby v FC Copenhagen
Esbjerg v Herfolge
OB v AB
Viborg v Frem
AGF v Midtjylland

Sun, November 23

AaB v OB
Nordsjaelland v Esbjerg
Herfolge v Brondby
Midtjylland v Viborg
FC Copenhagen v AGF
Frem v AB

Sun, November 30

Brondby v Nordsjaelland
Esbjerg v AaB
AB v Midtjylland
OB v Frem
Viborg v FC Copenhagen
AGF v Herfolge

Sun, December 7

AaB v Brondby
Esbjerg v OB
Nordsjaelland v AGF
Herfolge v Viborg
Midtjylland v Frem
FC Copenhagen v AB

Sun, March 14, 2004

Brondby v Esbjerg
AB v Herfolge
OB v Midtjylland
Frem v FC Copenhagen
Viborg v Nordsjaelland
AGF v AaB

Sun, March 21

AaB v Viborg
Esbjerg v AGF
Nordsjaelland v AB
Herfolge v Frem
OB v Brondby
FC Copenhagen v Midtjylland

Sun, March 28

AaB v Esbjerg
Nordsjaelland v Brondby
Herfolge v AGF
Midtjylland v AB
FC Copenhagen v Viborg
Frem v OB

Sun, April 4

Brondby v Herfolge
Esbjerg v Nordsjaelland
AB v Frem
OB v AaB
Viborg v Midtjylland
AGF v FC Copenhagen

Mon, April 12

AaB v AGF
Esbjerg v Brondby
Nordsjaelland v Viborg
Herfolge v AB
Midtjylland v OB
FC Copenhagen v Frem

Sun, April 18

Brondby v AaB
AB v FC Copenhagen
OB v Esbjerg
Frem v Midtjylland
Viborg v Herfolge
AGF v Nordsjaelland

Sun, April 25

AB v Esbjerg
Midtjylland v Nordsjaelland
FC Copenhagen v Herfolge
Frem v AaB
Viborg v Brondby
AGF v OB

Sun, May 2

AaB v AB
Brondby v AGF
Esbjerg v Viborg
Nordsjaelland v Frem
Herfolge v Midtjylland
OB v FC Copenhagen

Sun, May 9

Brondby v OB
AB v Nordsjaelland
Midtjylland v FC Copenhagen
Frem v Herfolge
Viborg v AaB
AGF v Esbjerg

Thu, May 13

Nordsjaelland v AaB
AB v OB
Herfolge v Esbjerg
Midtjylland v AGF
FC Copenhagen v Brondby
Frem v Viborg

Sun, May 16

AaB v Herfolge
Brondby v Midtjylland
Esbjerg v FC Copenhagen
OB v Nordsjaelland
Viborg v AB
AGF v Frem

Sun, May 23

AB v AGF
Herfolge v Nordsjaelland
Midtjylland v Esbjerg
FC Copenhagen v AaB
Frem v Brondby
Viborg v OB

Sat, May 29

AaB v Midtjylland
Brondby v AB
Esbjerg v Frem
Nordsjaelland v FC Copenhagen
OB v Herfolge
AGF v Viborg

FRANCE

Sat, August 2, 2003

Auxerre v Nice
Guingamp v Marseille
Lens v Le Mans
Lille v Lyon
Metz v Ajaccio
Monaco v Bordeaux
Montpellier v Rennes
Paris Saint-Germain v Bastia
Sochaux v Nantes
Toulouse v Strasbourg

Sat, August 9

Bastia v Metz
Bordeaux v Montpellier
Le Mans v Ajaccio
Lille v Paris Saint-Germain
Lyon v Monaco
Marseille v Auxerre
Nantes v Lens
Nice v Sochaux
Rennes v Toulouse
Strasbourg v Guingamp

Sat, August 16

Ajaccio v Nantes
Auxerre v Strasbourg
Guingamp v Bordeaux
Le Mans v Nice
Lens v Marseille
Metz v Paris Saint-Germain
Monaco v Bastia
Montpellier v Lyon
Sochaux v Rennes
Toulouse v Lille

Sat, August 23

Bastia v Montpellier
Bordeaux v Auxerre
Lille v Metz
Lyon v Toulouse
Marseille v Sochaux
Nantes v Le Mans
Nice v Ajaccio
Paris Saint-Germain v Monaco
Rennes v Guingamp
Strasbourg v Lens

Sat, August 30

Ajaccio v Marseille
Auxerre v Rennes
Guingamp v Lyon
Le Mans v Strasbourg
Lens v Nice
Monaco v Metz
Montpellier v Paris Saint-Germain
Nantes v Bordeaux
Sochaux v Lille
Toulouse v Bastia

Sat, September 13

Bastia v Guingamp
Bordeaux v Sochaux
Lille v Monaco
Lyon v Auxerre
Marseille v Le Mans
Metz v Montpellier
Nice v Nantes
Paris Saint-Germain v Toulouse
Rennes v Lens
Strasbourg v Ajaccio

Sat, September 20

Ajaccio v Rennes
Auxerre v Bastia
Guingamp v Paris Saint-Germain
Le Mans v Lyon
Lens v Bordeaux
Montpellier v Monaco
Nantes v Marseille
Nice v Lille
Sochaux v Strasbourg
Toulouse v Metz

Fri, September 26

Bastia v Sochaux
Bordeaux v Ajaccio
Lille v Montpellier
Lyon v Lens
Marseille v Nice
Metz v Guingamp
Monaco v Toulouse
Paris Saint-Germain v Auxerre
Rennes v Le Mans
Strasbourg v Nantes

Sat, October 4

Ajaccio v Lyon
Auxerre v Lille
Guingamp v Monaco
Le Mans v Bordeaux
Lens v Metz
Marseille v Bastia
Nantes v Rennes
Nice v Strasbourg
Sochaux v Paris Saint-Germain
Toulouse v Montpellier

Sat, October 18

Bastia v Lens
Bordeaux v Toulouse
Lille v Ajaccio
Lyon v Sochaux
Metz v Nantes
Monaco v Auxerre
Montpellier v Guingamp
Paris Saint-Germain v Le Mans
Rennes v Nice
Strasbourg v Marseille

Sat, October 25

Ajaccio v Paris Saint-Germain
Auxerre v Montpellier
Guingamp v Toulouse
Le Mans v Bastia
Lens v Lille
Marseille v Rennes
Nantes v Lyon
Nice v Bordeaux
Sochaux v Monaco
Strasbourg v Metz

Sat, November 1

Bastia v Ajaccio
Bordeaux v Marseille
Lille v Guingamp
Lyon v Nice
Metz v Sochaux
Monaco v Le Mans
Montpellier v Nantes
Paris Saint-Germain v Lens
Rennes v Strasbourg
Toulouse v Auxerre

Sat, November 8

Ajaccio v Monaco
Auxerre v Guingamp
Le Mans v Metz
Lens v Montpellier
Marseille v Lyon
Nantes v Paris Saint-Germain
Nice v Bastia
Rennes v Lille
Sochaux v Toulouse
Strasbourg v Bordeaux

Sat, November 22

Bastia v Nantes
Bordeaux v Rennes
Guingamp v Sochaux
Lille v Marseille
Lyon v Strasbourg
Metz v Auxerre
Monaco v Lens
Montpellier v Ajaccio
Paris Saint-Germain v Nice
Toulouse v Le Mans

Sat, November 29

Ajaccio v Toulouse
Bordeaux v Bastia
Le Mans v Montpellier
Lens v Guingamp
Marseille v Paris Saint-Germain
Nantes v Monaco
Nice v Metz
Rennes v Lyon
Sochaux v Auxerre
Strasbourg v Lille

Wed, December 3

Auxerre v Le Mans
Bastia v Rennes
Guingamp v Ajaccio
Lille v Nantes
Lyon v Bordeaux
Metz v Marseille
Monaco v Nice
Montpellier v Sochaux
Paris Saint-Germain v Strasbourg
Toulouse v Lens

Sat, December 6

Ajaccio v Auxerre
Bordeaux v Lille
Le Mans v Guingamp
Lens v Sochaux
Lyon v Metz
Marseille v Monaco
Nantes v Toulouse
Nice v Montpellier
Rennes v Paris Saint-Germain
Strasbourg v Bastia

Sat, December 13

Auxerre v Lens
Bastia v Lyon
Guingamp v Nantes
Lille v Le Mans
Metz v Rennes
Monaco v Strasbourg
Montpellier v Marseille
Paris Saint-Germain v Bordeaux
Sochaux v Ajaccio
Toulouse v Nice

Sat, December 20

Ajaccio v Lens
Bastia v Lille
Bordeaux v Metz
Le Mans v Sochaux

Lyon v Paris Saint-Germain
Marseille v Toulouse
Nantes v Auxerre
Nice v Guingamp
Rennes v Monaco
Strasbourg v Montpellier

Sat, January 10, 2004

Ajaccio v Le Mans
Auxerre v Marseille
Guingamp v Strasbourg
Lens v Nantes
Metz v Bastia
Monaco v Lyon
Montpellier v Bordeaux
Paris Saint-Germain v Lille
Sochaux v Nice
Toulouse v Rennes

Sat, January 17

Bastia v Monaco
Bordeaux v Guingamp
Lille v Toulouse
Lyon v Montpellier
Marseille v Lens
Nantes v Ajaccio
Nice v Le Mans
Paris Saint-Germain v Metz
Rennes v Sochaux
Strasbourg v Auxerre

Sat, January 31

Ajaccio v Nice
Auxerre v Bordeaux
Guingamp v Rennes
Le Mans v Nantes
Lens v Strasbourg
Metz v Lille
Monaco v Paris Saint-Germain
Montpellier v Bastia
Sochaux v Marseille
Toulouse v Lyon

Sat, February 7

Bastia v Toulouse
Bordeaux v Nantes
Lille v Sochaux
Lyon v Guingamp
Marseille v Ajaccio
Metz v Monaco
Nice v Lens
Paris Saint-Germain v Montpellier
Rennes v Auxerre
Strasbourg v Le Mans

Sat, February 14

Ajaccio v Strasbourg
Auxerre v Lyon
Guingamp v Bastia
Le Mans v Marseille
Lens v Rennes
Monaco v Lille
Montpellier v Metz
Nantes v Nice
Sochaux v Bordeaux
Toulouse v Paris Saint-Germain

Sat, February 21

Bastia v Auxerre
Bordeaux v Lens
Lille v Nice
Lyon v Le Mans
Marseille v Nantes
Metz v Toulouse
Monaco v Montpellier
Paris Saint-Germain v Guingamp
Rennes v Ajaccio
Strasbourg v Sochaux

Sat, February 28

Ajaccio v Bordeaux
Auxerre v Paris Saint-Germain
Guingamp v Metz
Le Mans v Rennes
Lens v Lyon
Montpellier v Lille
Nantes v Strasbourg
Nice v Marseille
Sochaux v Bastia
Toulouse v Monaco

Sat, March 6

Bastia v Marseille
Bordeaux v Le Mans
Lille v Auxerre
Lyon v Ajaccio
Metz v Lens
Monaco v Guingamp
Montpellier v Toulouse
Paris Saint-Germain v Sochaux
Rennes v Nantes
Strasbourg v Nice

Sat, March 13

Ajaccio v Lille
Auxerre v Monaco
Guingamp v Montpellier
Le Mans v Paris Saint-Germain
Lens v Bastia
Marseille v Strasbourg
Nantes v Metz
Nice v Rennes
Sochaux v Lyon
Toulouse v Bordeaux

Sat, March 20

Bastia v Le Mans
Bordeaux v Nice
Lille v Lens
Lyon v Nantes
Metz v Strasbourg
Monaco v Sochaux
Montpellier v Auxerre
Paris Saint-Germain v Ajaccio
Rennes v Marseille
Toulouse v Guingamp

Sat, March 27

Ajaccio v Bastia
Auxerre v Toulouse
Guingamp v Lille
Le Mans v Monaco
Lens v Paris Saint-Germain
Marseille v Bordeaux
Nantes v Montpellier
Nice v Lyon
Sochaux v Metz
Strasbourg v Rennes

Sat, April 3

Bastia v Nice
Bordeaux v Strasbourg
Guingamp v Auxerre
Lille v Rennes
Lyon v Marseille
Metz v Le Mans
Monaco v Ajaccio
Montpellier v Lens
Paris Saint-Germain v Nantes
Toulouse v Sochaux

Sat, April 10

Ajaccio v Montpellier
Auxerre v Metz
Le Mans v Toulouse
Lens v Monaco
Marseille v Lille
Nantes v Bastia
Nice v Paris Saint-Germain
Rennes v Bordeaux
Sochaux v Guingamp
Strasbourg v Lyon

Sat, April 24

Auxerre v Sochaux
Bastia v Bordeaux
Guingamp v Lens
Lille v Strasbourg
Lyon v Rennes
Metz v Nice
Monaco v Nantes
Montpellier v Le Mans
Paris Saint-Germain v Marseille
Toulouse v Ajaccio

Sat, May 1

Ajaccio v Guingamp
Bordeaux v Lyon
Le Mans v Auxerre
Lens v Toulouse
Marseille v Metz
Nantes v Lille
Nice v Monaco
Rennes v Bastia
Sochaux v Montpellier
Strasbourg v Paris Saint-Germain

Sat, May 8

Auxerre v Ajaccio
Bastia v Strasbourg
Guingamp v Le Mans
Lille v Bordeaux
Metz v Lyon
Monaco v Marseille
Montpellier v Nice
Paris Saint-Germain v Rennes
Sochaux v Lens
Toulouse v Nantes

Wed, May 12

Ajaccio v Sochaux
Bordeaux v Paris Saint-Germain
Le Mans v Lille
Lens v Auxerre
Lyon v Bastia
Marseille v Montpellier
Nantes v Guingamp
Nice v Toulouse
Rennes v Metz
Strasbourg v Monaco

Sat, May 15

Auxerre v Nantes
Guingamp v Nice
Lens v Ajaccio
Lille v Bastia
Metz v Bordeaux
Monaco v Rennes
Montpellier v Strasbourg
Paris Saint-Germain v Lyon
Sochaux v Le Mans
Toulouse v Marseille

Sun, May 23

Ajaccio v Metz
Bastia v Paris Saint-Germain
Bordeaux v Monaco
Le Mans v Lens
Lyon v Lille
Marseille v Guingamp
Nantes v Sochaux
Nice v Auxerre
Rennes v Montpellier
Strasbourg v Toulouse

GERMANY

Sat, August 2, 2003

Wolfsburg v Bochum
Kaiserslautern v 1860 Munich
Monchengladbach v Koln
Hertha Berlin v Werder Bremen
Hansa Rostock v Stuttgart
Leverkusen v Freiburg
Bayern Munich v Eintracht Frankfurt
Hamburg v Hannover
Schalke v Dortmund

Sat, August 9

Hannover v Bayern Munich
Eintracht Frankfurt v Leverkusen
Freiburg v Hansa Rostock

Going to ground...Bayern Munich v Stuttgart

Stuttgart v Hertha Berlin
Werder Bremen v Monchengladbach
Koln v Kaiserslautern
1860 Munich v Schalke
Dortmund v Wolfsburg
Bochum v Hamburg

Sat, August 16

Wolfsburg v Hamburg
Kaiserslautern v Werder Bremen
Monchengladbach v Stuttgart
Hertha Berlin v Freiburg
Hansa Rostock v Eintracht Frankfurt
Leverkusen v Hannover
Bayern Munich v Bochum
Dortmund v 1860 Munich
Schalke v Koln

Sat, August 23

Hannover v Hansa Rostock
Eintracht Frankfurt v Hertha Berlin
Freiburg v Monchengladbach
Stuttgart v Kaiserslautern
Werder Bremen v Schalke
Koln v Dortmund
1860 Munich v Wolfsburg
Hamburg v Bayern Munich
Bochum v Leverkusen

Sat, September 13

Wolfsburg v Bayern Munich
Kaiserslautern v Freiburg
Monchengladbach v Eintracht Frankfurt
Hertha Berlin v Hannover
Hansa Rostock v Bochum
Leverkusen v Hamburg
1860 Munich v Koln
Dortmund v Werder Bremen
Schalke v Stuttgart

Sat, September 20

Hannover v Monchengladbach
Eintracht Frankfurt v Kaiserslautern
Freiburg v Schalke
Stuttgart v Dortmund
Werder Bremen v 1860 Munich
Koln v Wolfsburg
Bayern Munich v Leverkusen
Hamburg v Hansa Rostock
Bochum v Hertha Berlin

Sat, September 27

Wolfsburg v Leverkusen
Kaiserslautern v Hannover
Monchengladbach v Bochum
Hertha Berlin v Hamburg
Hansa Rostock v Bayern Munich
Koln v Werder Bremen
1860 Munich v Stuttgart
Dortmund v Freiburg
Schalke v Eintracht Frankfurt

Sat, October 4

Hannover v Schalke
Eintracht Frankfurt v Dortmund
Freiburg v 1860 Munich
Stuttgart v Koln
Werder Bremen v Wolfsburg
Leverkusen v Hansa Rostock
Bayern Munich v Hertha Berlin
Hamburg v Monchengladbach
Bochum v Kaiserslautern

Sat, October 18

Wolfsburg v Hansa Rostock
Kaiserslautern v Hamburg
Monchengladbach v Bayern Munich
Hertha Berlin v Leverkusen
Werder Bremen v Stuttgart
Koln v Freiburg
1860 Munich v Eintracht Frankfurt
Dortmund v Hannover
Schalke v Bochum

Sat, October 25

Hannover v 1860 Munich
Eintracht Frankfurt v Koln
Freiburg v Werder Bremen
Stuttgart v Wolfsburg
Hansa Rostock v Hertha Berlin
Leverkusen v Monchengladbach
Bayern Munich v Kaiserslautern
Hamburg v Schalke
Bochum v Dortmund

Sat, November 1

Wolfsburg v Hertha Berlin
Kaiserslautern v Leverkusen
Monchengladbach v Hansa Rostock
Stuttgart v Freiburg
Werder Bremen v Eintracht Frankfurt
Koln v Hannover
1860 Munich v Bochum
Dortmund v Hamburg
Schalke v Bayern Munich

Sat, November 8

Hannover v Werder Bremen
Eintracht Frankfurt v Stuttgart
Freiburg v Wolfsburg
Hertha Berlin v Monchengladbach
Hansa Rostock v Kaiserslautern
Leverkusen v Schalke
Bayern Munich v Dortmund
Hamburg v 1860 Munich
Bochum v Koln

Sat, November 22

Wolfsburg v Monchengladbach
Kaiserslautern v Hertha Berlin
Freiburg v Eintracht Frankfurt
Stuttgart v Hannover
Werder Bremen v Bochum
Koln v Hamburg
1860 Munich v Bayern Munich
Dortmund v Leverkusen
Schalke v Hansa Rostock

Sat, November 29

Hannover v Freiburg
Eintracht Frankfurt v Wolfsburg
Monchengladbach v Kaiserslautern
Hertha Berlin v Schalke
Hansa Rostock v Dortmund
Leverkusen v 1860 Munich
Bayern Munich v Koln
Hamburg v Werder Bremen
Bochum v Stuttgart

Sat, December 6

Wolfsburg v Kaiserslautern
Eintracht Frankfurt v Hannover
Freiburg v Bochum
Stuttgart v Hamburg
Werder Bremen v Bayern Munich
Koln v Leverkusen
1860 Munich v Hansa Rostock
Dortmund v Hertha Berlin
Schalke v Monchengladbach

Sat, December 13

Wolfsburg v Hannover
Kaiserslautern v Schalke
Monchengladbach v Dortmund
Hertha Berlin v 1860 Munich
Hansa Rostock v Koln
Leverkusen v Werder Bremen
Bayern Munich v Stuttgart
Hamburg v Freiburg
Bochum v Eintracht Frankfurt

Wed, December 17

Hannover v Bochum
Eintracht Frankfurt v Hamburg
Freiburg v Bayern Munich
Stuttgart v Leverkusen
Werder Bremen v Hansa Rostock
Koln v Hertha Berlin
1860 Munich v Monchengladbach
Dortmund v Kaiserslautern
Schalke v Wolfsburg

Sat, January 31, 2004

Bochum v Wolfsburg
1860 Munich v Kaiserslautern
Koln v Monchengladbach
Werder Bremen v Hertha Berlin
Stuttgart v Hansa Rostock
Freiburg v Leverkusen
Eintracht Frankfurt v Bayern Munich
Hannover v Hamburg
Dortmund v Schalke

Sat, February 7

Bayern Munich v Hannover
Leverkusen v Eintracht Frankfurt
Hansa Rostock v Freiburg
Hertha Berlin v Stuttgart
Monchengladbach v Werder Bremen
Kaiserslautern v Koln
Schalke v 1860 Munich
Wolfsburg v Dortmund
Hamburg v Bochum

Sat, February 14

Hamburg v Wolfsburg
Werder Bremen v Kaiserslautern
Stuttgart v Monchengladbach
Freiburg v Hertha Berlin
Eintracht Frankfurt v Hansa Rostock
Hannover v Leverkusen
Bochum v Bayern Munich
1860 Munich v Dortmund
Koln v Schalke

Sat, February 21

Hansa Rostock v Hannover
Hertha Berlin v Eintracht Frankfurt
Monchengladbach v Freiburg
Kaiserslautern v Stuttgart
Schalke v Werder Bremen
Dortmund v Koln
Wolfsburg v 1860 Munich
Bayern Munich v Hamburg
Leverkusen v Bochum

Sat, February 28

Bayern Munich v Wolfsburg
Freiburg v Kaiserslautern
Eintracht Frankfurt v Monchengladbach
Hannover v Hertha Berlin
Bochum v Hansa Rostock
Hamburg v Leverkusen
Koln v 1860 Munich
Werder Bremen v Dortmund
Stuttgart v Schalke

Sat, March 6

Monchengladbach v Hannover
Kaiserslautern v Eintracht Frankfurt
Schalke v Freiburg
Dortmund v Stuttgart
1860 Munich v Werder Bremen
Wolfsburg v Koln
Leverkusen v Bayern Munich
Hansa Rostock v Hamburg
Hertha Berlin v Bochum

Sat, March 13

Leverkusen v Wolfsburg
Hannover v Kaiserslautern
Bochum v Monchengladbach
Hamburg v Hertha Berlin
Bayern Munich v Hansa Rostock
Werder Bremen v Koln
Stuttgart v 1860 Munich
Freiburg v Dortmund
Eintracht Frankfurt v Schalke

Sat, March 20

Schalke v Hannover
Dortmund v Eintracht Frankfurt
1860 Munich v Freiburg
Koln v Stuttgart
Wolfsburg v Werder Bremen
Hansa Rostock v Leverkusen
Hertha Berlin v Bayern Munich
Monchengladbach v Hamburg
Kaiserslautern v Bochum

Sat, March 27

Hansa Rostock v Wolfsburg
Hamburg v Kaiserslautern
Bayern Munich v Monchengladbach
Leverkusen v Hertha Berlin
Stuttgart v Werder Bremen
Freiburg v Koln
Eintracht Frankfurt v 1860 Munich
Hannover v Dortmund
Bochum v Schalke

Sat, April 3

1860 Munich v Hannover
Koln v Eintracht Frankfurt
Werder Bremen v Freiburg
Wolfsburg v Stuttgart
Hertha Berlin v Hansa Rostock
Monchengladbach v Leverkusen
Kaiserslautern v Bayern Munich
Schalke v Hamburg
Dortmund v Bochum

Sat, April 10

Hertha Berlin v Wolfsburg
Leverkusen v Kaiserslautern
Hansa Rostock v Monchengladbach
Freiburg v Stuttgart
Eintracht Frankfurt v Werder Bremen
Hannover v Koln
Bochum v 1860 Munich
Hamburg v Dortmund
Bayern Munich v Schalke

Sat, April 17

Werder Bremen v Hannover
Stuttgart v Eintracht Frankfurt
Wolfsburg v Freiburg
Monchengladbach v Hertha Berlin
Kaiserslautern v Hansa Rostock
Schalke v Leverkusen
Dortmund v Bayern Munich
1860 Munich v Hamburg
Koln v Bochum

Sat, April 24

Monchengladbach v Wolfsburg
Hertha Berlin v Kaiserslautern
Eintracht Frankfurt v Freiburg
Hannover v Stuttgart
Bochum v Werder Bremen
Hamburg v Koln
Bayern Munich v 1860 Munich
Leverkusen v Dortmund
Hansa Rostock v Schalke

Sat, May 1

Freiburg v Hannover
Wolfsburg v Eintracht Frankfurt
Kaiserslautern v Monchengladbach
Schalke v Hertha Berlin
Dortmund v Hansa Rostock
1860 Munich v Leverkusen
Koln v Bayern Munich Werder Bremen v Hamburg
Stuttgart v Bochum

Sat, May 8

Kaiserslautern v Wolfsburg
Hannover v Eintracht Frankfurt
Bochum v Freiburg
Hamburg v Stuttgart
Bayern Munich v Werder Bremen
Leverkusen v Koln
Hansa Rostock v 1860 Munich
Hertha Berlin v Dortmund
Monchengladbach v Schalke

Sat, May 15

Hannover v Wolfsburg
Schalke v Kaiserslautern
Dortmund v Monchengladbach
1860 Munich v Hertha Berlin
Koln v Hansa Rostock
Werder Bremen v Leverkusen
Stuttgart v Bayern Munich
Freiburg v Hamburg
Eintracht Frankfurt v Bochum

Sat, May 22

Wolfsburg v Schalke
Bochum v Hannover
Hamburg v Eintracht Frankfurt
Bayern Munich v Freiburg
Leverkusen v Stuttgart
Hansa Rostock v Werder Bremen
Hertha Berlin v Koln
Monchengladbach v 1860 Munich
Kaiserslautern v Dortmund

SWITZERLAND

Wed, July 16, 2003

Basle v Zurich
Grasshopper v Xamax
Servette v Wil
St Gallen v Young Boys
Thun v Aarau

Sat, July 19

Aarau v Grasshopper
Xamax v St Gallen
Zurich v Servette

Tue, July 22

Wil v Thun
Young Boys v Basle

Sat, July 26

Basle v Xamax
Servette v Thun
St Gallen v Aarau
Young Boys v Zurich

Tue, July 29

Grasshopper v Wil

Sat, August 2

Aarau v Servette
Xamax v Young Boys
Thun v Grasshopper
Wil v Basle
Zurich v St Gallen

Fri, August 8

Basle v Aarau
Grasshopper v Servette
Xamax v Zurich
St Gallen v Thun
Young Boys v Wil

Sat, August 16

Aarau v Young Boys
Grasshopper v Zurich
Servette v St Gallen
Thun v Basle
Wil v Xamax

Fri, August 22

Basle v Servette
Xamax v Aarau
St Gallen v Grasshopper
Young Boys v Thun
Zurich v Wil

Sat, August 30

Aarau v Zurich
Grasshopper v Basle
Servette v Young Boys
St Gallen v Wil
Thun v Xamax

Wed, September 3

Basle v St Gallen
Xamax v Servette
Wil v Aarau
Young Boys v Grasshopper
Zurich v Thun

Sun, September 14

Aarau v Thun
Xamax v Grasshopper
Wil v Servette
Young Boys v St Gallen
Zurich v Basle

Sun, September 28

Basle v Young Boys
Grasshopper v Aarau
Servette v Zurich
St Gallen v Xamax
Thun v Wil

Thu, October 2

Aarau v St Gallen
Thun v Servette
Wil v Grasshopper
Xamax v Basle
Zurich v Young Boys

Sun, October 5

Basle v Wil
Grasshopper v Thun
Servette v Aarau
St Gallen v Zurich
Young Boys v Xamax

Sun, October 26

Aarau v Basle
Servette v Grasshopper
Thun v St Gallen
Wil v Young Boys
Zurich v Xamax

Wed, October 29

Basle v Thun
St Gallen v Servette
Xamax v Wil
Young Boys v Aarau
Zurich v Grasshopper

Sun, November 2

Aarau v Xamax
Grasshopper v St Gallen
Servette v Basle
Thun v Young Boys
Wil v Zurich

Sun, November 23

Basle v Grasshopper
Wil v St Gallen
Xamax v Thun
Young Boys v Servette
Zurich v Aarau

Sun, November 30

Aarau v Wil
Grasshopper v Young Boys
Servette v Xamax
St Gallen v Basle
Thun v Zurich

Transfers

PLAYER	POS	FROM	TO
Demetrio ALBERTINI	M	Milan	Lazio
Bittor ALKIZA	M	Athletic Bilbao	Real Sociedad
Marco AMBROSIO	G	Chievo	Chelsea
Lorenzo AMORUSO	D	Rangers	Blackburn
Sonny ANDERSON	F	Lyon	Villarreal
Francesco ANTONIOLI	G	Roma	Sampdoria
Stephen APPIAH	M	Parma	Juventus
Gabriel BATISTUTA	F	Internazionale	Al Arabi
David BECKHAM	M	Manchester United	Real Madrid
David BELLION	F	Sunderland	Manchester United
Ali BENARBIA	M	Manchester City	Al Rayan
Patrick BERGER	M	Liverpool	Portsmouth
Fredi BOBIC	F	Hannover	Hertha Berlin
Lee BOWYER	M	West Ham	Newcastle
Wayne BRIDGE	D	Southampton	Chelsea
Ricardo CABANAS	M	Grasshopper	Guingamp
CAFU	D	Roma	Milan
Zoumana CAMARA	D	Lens	Leeds
Ivan CAMPO	D	Real Madrid	Bolton
Nuno CAPUCHO	F	FC Porto	Rangers
Lucas CASTROMAN	M	Lazio	Udinese
Cristian CHIVU	D	Ajax	Roma
Philippe CHRISTANVAL	D	Barcelona	Marseille
Thomas CHRISTIANSEN	F	Bochum	Hannover
Ousmane DABO	M	Atalanta	Lazio
Olivier DACOURT	M	Leeds	Roma
Andres D'ALESSANDRO	M	River Plate	Wolfsburg
Sam DALLA BONA	M	Milan	Bologna
Kevin DAVIES	F	out of contract	Bolton
Frank DE BOER	D	Barcelona	Galatasaray
Martin DEMICHELIS	D	River Plate	Bayern Munich
Bernard DIOMEDE	M	Liverpool	Ajaccio
Eric DJEMBA DJEMBA	M	Nantes	Manchester United
Massimo DONATI	M	Milan	Sampdoria
Cristiano DONI	M	Atalanta	Sampdoria
DORIVA	M	Celta Vigo	Middlesbrough
Didier DROGBA	F	Guingamp	Marseille
Damien DUFF	M	Blackburn	Chelsea
Christophe DUGARRY	F	Bordeaux	Birmingham
David DUNN	M	Blackburn	Birmingham
Richard DUTRUEL	G	Alaves	Strasbourg
Brett EMERTON	M	Feyenoord	Blackburn
Julien ESCUDE	D	Rennes	Ajax
Mickael ESSIEN	M	Bastia	Lyon
Les FERDINAND	F	West Ham	Leicester
Luciano FIGUEROA	F	Rosario Central	Birmingham
Steve FINNAN	D	Fulham	Liverpool
Diego FUSER	M	Roma	Torino
GEREMI	M	Real Madrid	Chelsea
Saad GHADDAFI	M	Al Ittihad	Perugia
Keith GILLESPIE	M	out of contract	Leicester
Zdenek GRYGERA	D	Sparta Prague	Ajax
Jorg HEINRICH	M	Borussia Dortmund	Koln
HELDER POSTIGA	F	FC Porto	Tottenham
Craig HIGNETT	M	Blackburn	Leicester
Matt HOLLAND	M	Ipswich	Charlton
Ahmed HOSSAM	F	Ajax	Marseille
Tim HOWARD	G	MetroStars	Manchester United
Steve HOWEY	D	Manchester City	Leicester
Dario HUBNER	F	Piacenza	Ancona
Morten HYLDGAARD	G	Coventry	Hibernian
Niclas JENSEN	D	Manchester City	Borussia Dortmund
Simon JENTZSCH	G	1860 Munich	Wolfsburg
Glen JOHNSON	D	West Ham	Chelsea
Mads JORGENSEN	M	Brondby	Ancona
Martin JORGENSEN	M	Udinese	Lazio
JOSE MARI	F	Milan	Villarreal
Bonaventure KALOU	F	Feyenoord	Auxerre
Giorgios KARAGOUNIS	M	Panathinaikos	Bolton

PLAYER	POS	FROM	TO
Harry KEWELL	F	Leeds	Liverpool
Zurab KHIZANISHVILI	D	Dundee	Rangers
Joonas KOLKKA	M	Panathinaikos	Monchengladbach
Dirk KUIJT	F	Utrecht	Feyenoord
Florent LAVILLE	D	Lyon	Bolton
Nikola LAZETIC	M	Chievo	Siena
Graeme LE SAUX	D	Southampton	Chelsea
Anthony LE TALLEC	F	Le Havre	Liverpool
Frank LEBOEUF	D	Marseille	Al Sadd
LEE Chun-soo	F	Ulsan Hyundai	Real Sociedad
Nicola LEGROTTAGLIE	D	Chievo	Juventus
Jens LEHMANN	G	Borussia Dortmund	Arsenal
Fabio LIVERANI	M	Lazio	Udinese
LUCIANO	D	Chievo	Internazionale
Teddy LUCIC	D	AIK Stockholm	Bayer Leverkusen
Alex MANNINGER	G	Torino	Bologna
Luca MARCHEGIANI	G	Lazio	Chievo
Rafael MARQUEZ	D	Monaco	Barcelona
Martin MAX	F	1860 Munich	Hansa Rostock
Modeste MBAMI	M	Sedan	Paris Saint-Germain
Gavin McCANN	M	Sunderland	Aston Villa
Benni McCARTHY	F	Celta Vigo	FC Porto
Fabrizio MICCOLI	F	Perugia	Juventus
Gabriel MILITO	D	Independiente	Zaragoza
Savo MILOSEVIC	F	Parma	Celta Vigo
Jody MORRIS	M	Chelsea	Leeds
Kiki MUSAMPA	F	Malaga	Atletico Madrid
Lilian NALIS	M	Chievo	Leicester
Demis NIKOLAIDIS	F	AEK Athens	Atletico Madrid
Shabani NONDA	F	Monaco	Lyon
Marc NYGAARD	F	Excelsior	Brescia
Pascal OJIGWE	D	Bayer Leverkusen	Monchengladbach
Ioannis OKKAS	M	PAOK	AEK Athens
Isaac OKORONKWO	D	Shakhtar Donetsk	Wolves
PAULETA	F	Bordeaux	Paris Saint-Germain
David PIZARRO	M	Udinese	Lazio
Tobias RAU	D	Wolfsburg	Bayern Munich
RONALDINHO	F	Paris Saint-Germain	Barcelona
RUSTU Recber	G	Fenerbahce	Barcelona
Marcelo SALAS	F	Juventus	River Plate
Ricardo SCIMECA	D	Nottingham Forest	Leicester
David SEAMAN	G	Arsenal	Manchester City
Philippe SENDEROS	D	Servette	Arsenal
Matteo SERENI	G	Ipswich	Lazio
Teddy SHERINGHAM	F	Tottenham	Portsmouth
SILAS	M	Uniao Leiria	Wolves
Diego SIMEONE	M	Lazio	Atletico Madrid
Trevor SINCLAIR	M	West Ham	Manchester City
Wesley SONCK	F	Genk	Ajax
Dejan STEFANOVIC	D	Vitesse Arnhem	Portsmouth
Imre SZABICS	F	Sturm Graz	Stuttgart
Michael TARNAT	D	Bayern Munich	Manchester City
Ben THATCHER	D	Tottenham	Leicester
Razundara TJIKUZU	D	Werder Bremen	Hansa Rostock
Marko TOPIC	F	Energie Cottbus	Wolfsburg
Stepan VACHOUSEK	M	Slavia Prague	Marseille
Andy VAN DER MEYDE	M	Ajax	Internazionale
Pierre VAN HOOIJDONK	F	Feyenoord	Fenerbahce
Andrii VORONIN	F	Mainz	Koln
Jurica VRANJES	M	Bayer Leverkusen	Stuttgart
Pierre WOME	D	Bologna	Espanyol
Atsushi YANAGISAWA	F	Kashima Antlers	Sampdoria
Joseph YOBO	D	Marseille	Everton
Bobby ZAMORA	F	Brighton	Tottenham
Cristian ZENONI	M	Juventus	Sampdoria
Boris ZIVKOVIC	D	Bayer Leverkusen	Portsmouth
Gianfranco ZOLA	F	Chelsea	Cagliari

EURO 2004 QUALIFIERS

Group 1

07.09.02 .....Cyprus-France 1-2
07.09.02 .....Slovenia-Malta.....3-0
12.10.02 .....France-Slovenia.....5-0
12.10.02 .....Malta-Israel.....0-2
16.10.02 .....Malta-France 0-4
20.11.02 .....Cyprus-Malta 2-1
29.03.03 .....Cyprus-Israel.....1-1
29.03.03 .....France-Malta 6-0
02.04.03 .....Israel-France.....1-2
02.04.03 .....Slovenia-Cyprus.....4-1
30.04.03 .....Israel-Cyprus.....2-0
30.04.03 .....Malta-Slovenia.....1-3
07.06.03 .....Israel-Slovenia 0-0
07.06.03 .....Malta-Cyprus 1-2
06.09.03 .....France-Cyprus
06.09.03 .....Slovenia-Israel
10.09.03 .....Israel-Malta
10.09.03 .....Slovenia-France
11.10.03 .....Cyprus-Slovenia
11.10.03 .....France-Israel

GROUP 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	5	5	0	0	19	2	15
Slovenia	5	3	1	1	10	7	10
Israel	5	2	2	1	6	3	8
Cyprus	6	2	1	3	7	11	7
Malta	7	0	0	7	3	22	0

Group 2

07.09.02 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Romania 0-3
07.09.02 .....Norway-Denmark.....2-2
12.10.02 .....Denmark-Luxembourg 2-0
12.10.02 .....Romania-Norway 0-1
16.10.02 .....Luxembourg-Romania 0-7
16.10.02 .....Norway-Bosnia-Herzegovina 2-0
29.03.03 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Luxembourg ..2-0
29.03.03 .....Romania-Denmark.....2-5
02.04.03 .....Denmark-Bosnia-Herzegovina.....0-2
02.04.03 .....Luxembourg-Norway 0-2
07.06.03 .....Denmark-Norway.....1-0
07.06.03 .....Romania-Bosnia-Herzegovina 2-0
11.06.03 .....Luxembourg-Denmark.....0-2
11.06.03 .....Norway-Romania 1-1
06.09.03 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Norway
06.09.03 .....Romania-Luxembourg
10.09.03 .....Denmark-Romania
10.09.03 .....Luxembourg-Bosnia-Herzegovina
11.10.03 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Denmark
11.10.03 .....Norway-Luxembourg

GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Denmark	6	4	1	1	12	6	13
Norway	6	3	2	1	8	4	11
Romania	6	3	1	2	15	7	10
Bosnia-Herz	5	2	0	3	4	7	6
Luxembourg	5	0	0	5	0	15	0

Group 3

07.09.02 .....Austria-Moldova.....2-0
07.09.02 .....Holland-Belarus 3-0
12.10.02 .....Belarus-Austria 0-2
12.10.02 .....Moldova-Czech Republic 0-2
16.10.02 .....Austria-Holland 0-3
16.10.02 .....Czech Republic-Belarus.....2-0
29.03.03 .....Belarus-Moldova.....2-1
29.03.03 .....Holland-Czech Republic.....1-1
02.04.03 .....Czech Republic-Austria.....4-0
02.04.03 .....Moldova-Holland.....1-2
07.06.03 .....Belarus-Holland 0-2
07.06.03 .....Moldova-Austria.....1-0
11.06.03 .....Austria-Belarus 5-0
11.06.03 .....Czech Republic-Moldova 5-0
06.09.03 .....Belarus-Czech Republic
06.09.03 .....Holland-Austria
10.09.03 .....Czech Republic-Holland
10.09.03 .....Moldova-Belarus
11.10.03 .....Austria-Czech Republic
11.10.03 .....Holland-Moldova

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Czech Republic	5	4	1	0	14	1	13
Holland	5	4	1	0	11	2	13
Austria	6	3	0	3	9	8	9
Belarus	6	1	0	5	2	15	3
Moldova	6	1	0	5	3	13	3

Group 4

07.09.02 .....Latvia-Sweden.....0-0
07.09.02 .....San Marino-Poland 0-2
12.10.02 .....Poland-Latvia.....0-1
12.10.02 .....Sweden-Hungary 1-1
16.10.02 .....Hungary-San Marino.....3-0
20.11.02 .....San Marino-Latvia.....0-1
29.03.03 .....Poland-Hungary 0-0
02.04.03 .....Hungary-Sweden 1-2
02.04.03 .....Poland-San Marino 5-0
30.04.03 .....Latvia-San Marino.....3-0
07.06.03 .....Hungary-Latvia 3-1
07.06.03 .....San Marino-Sweden 0-6
11.06.03 .....San Marino-Hungary.....0-5
11.06.03 .....Sweden-Poland.....3-0
06.09.03 .....Latvia-Poland
06.09.03 .....Sweden-San Marino
10.09.03 .....Latvia-Hungary
10.09.03 .....Poland-Sweden
11.10.03 .....Hungary-Poland
11.10.03 .....Sweden-Latvia

GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	5	3	2	0	12	2	11
Hungary	6	3	2	1	13	4	11
Latvia	5	3	1	1	6	3	10
Poland	5	2	1	2	7	4	7
San Marino	7	0	0	7	0	25	0

Group 5

07.09.02 .....Faroe Islands-Scotland 2-2
07.09.02 .....Lithuania-Germany 0-2
12.10.02 .....Iceland-Scotland.....0-2
12.10.02 .....Lithuania-Faroe Islands 2-0
16.10.02 .....Germany-Faroe Islands.....2-1
16.10.02 .....Iceland-Lithuania 3-0
29.03.03 .....Germany-Lithuania 1-1
29.03.03 .....Scotland-Iceland.....2-1
02.04.03 .....Lithuania-Scotland.....1-0
07.06.03 .....Iceland-Faroe Islands 2-1
07.06.03 .....Scotland-Germany 1-1
11.06.03 .....Faroe Islands-Germany.....0-2
11.06.03 .....Lithuania-Iceland 0-3
20.08.03 .....Faroe Islands-Iceland
06.09.03 .....Iceland-Germany
06.09.03 .....Scotland-Faroe Islands
10.09.03 .....Faroe Islands-Lithuania
10.09.03 .....Germany-Scotland
11.10.03 .....Germany-Iceland
11.10.03 .....Scotland-Lithuania

GROUP 5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	5	3	2	0	8	3	11
Iceland	5	3	0	2	9	5	9
Scotland	5	2	2	1	7	5	8
Lithuania	6	2	1	3	4	9	7
Faroe Islands	5	0	1	4	4	10	1

Group 6

07.09.02 .....Armenia-Ukraine.....2-2
07.09.02 .....Greece-Spain 0-2
12.10.02 .....Spain-Northern Ireland 3-0
12.10.02 .....Ukraine-Greece.....2-0
16.10.02 .....Greece-Armenia.....2-0
16.10.02 .....Northern Ireland-Ukraine 0-0
29.03.03 .....Armenia-Northern Ireland.....1-0
29.03.03 .....Ukraine-Spain 2-2
02.04.03 .....Northern Ireland-Greece 0-2
02.04.03 .....Spain-Armenia 3-0
07.06.03 .....Spain-Greece 0-1
07.06.03 .....Ukraine-Armenia.....4-3
11.06.03 .....Greece-Ukraine.....1-0
11.06.03 .....Northern Ireland-Spain 0-0
06.09.03 .....Armenia-Greece
06.09.03 .....Ukraine-Northern Ireland
10.09.03 .....Northern Ireland-Armenia
10.09.03 .....Spain-Ukraine
11.10.03 .....Armenia-Spain
11.10.03 .....Greece-Northern Ireland

GROUP 6

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Greece	6	4	0	2	6	4	12
Spain	6	3	2	1	10	3	11
Ukraine	6	2	3	1	10	8	9
Armenia	5	1	1	3	6	11	4
Northern Ireland	5	0	2	3	0	6	2

Group 7

07.09.02 .....Turkey-Slovakia 3-0
08.09.02 .....Liechtenstein-Macedonia 1-1
12.10.02 .....Macedonia-Turkey 1-2
12.10.02 .....Slovakia-England 1-2
16.10.02 .....England-Macedonia 2-2
16.10.02 .....Turkey-Liechtenstein 5-0
29.03.03 .....Liechtenstein-England 0-2
29.03.03 .....Macedonia-Slovakia 0-2
02.04.03 .....England-Turkey.....2-0
02.04.03 .....Slovakia-Liechtenstein 4-0
07.06.03 .....Macedonia-Liechtenstein 3-1
07.06.03 .....Slovakia-Turkey 0-1
11.06.03 .....England-Slovakia 2-1
11.06.03 .....Turkey-Macedonia 3-2
06.09.03 .....Liechtenstein-Turkey
06.09.03 .....Macedonia-England
10.09.03 .....England-Liechtenstein
10.09.03 .....Slovakia-Macedonia
11.10.03 .....Liechtenstein-Slovakia
11.10.03 .....Turkey-England

GROUP 7

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Turkey	6	5	0	1	14	5	15
England	5	4	1	0	10	4	13
Slovakia	6	2	0	4	8	8	6
Macedonia	6	1	2	3	9	11	5
Liechtenstein	5	0	1	4	2	15	1

Group 8

07.09.02 .....Belgium-Bulgaria 0-2
07.09.02 .....Croatia-Estonia 0-0
12.10.02 .....Andorra-Belgium.....0-1
12.10.02 .....Bulgaria-Croatia.....2-0
16.10.02 .....Bulgaria-Andorra 2-1
16.10.02 .....Estonia-Belgium.....0-1
29.03.03 .....Croatia-Belgium.....4-0
02.04.03 .....Croatia-Andorra 2-0
02.04.03 .....Estonia-Bulgaria 0-0
30.04.03 .....Andorra-Estonia 0-2
07.06.03 .....Bulgaria-Belgium 2-2
07.06.03 .....Estonia-Andorra 2-0
11.06.03 .....Belgium-Andorra.....3-0
11.06.03 .....Estonia-Croatia 0-1
06.09.03 .....Andorra-Croatia
06.09.03 .....Bulgaria-Estonia
10.09.03 .....Andorra-Bulgaria
10.09.03 .....Belgium-Croatia
11.10.03 .....Belgium-Estonia
11.10.03 .....Croatia-Bulgaria

GROUP 8

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bulgaria	5	3	2	0	8	3	11
Croatia	5	3	1	1	7	2	10
Belgium	6	3	1	2	7	8	10
Estonia	6	2	2	2	4	2	8
Andorra	6	0	0	6	1	12	0

Group 9

07.09.02 .....Azerbaijan-Italy 0-2
07.09.02 .....Finland-Wales 0-2
12.10.02 .....Finland-Azerbaijan 3-0
12.10.02 .....Italy-Serbia & Montenegro* 1-1
16.10.02 .....Wales-Italy 2-1
16.10.02 .....Serbia & Montenegro*-Finland 2-0
20.11.02 .....Azerbaijan-Wales 0-2
12.02.03 .....Serbia & Montenegro-Azerbaijan.....2-2
29.03.03 .....Italy-Finland 2-0
29.03.03 .....Wales-Azerbaijan 4-0
07.06.03 .....Finland-Serbia & Montenegro.....3-0
11.06.03 .....Azerbaijan-Serbia & Montenegro.....2-1
11.06.03 .....Finland-Italy 0-2
20.08.03 .....Serbia & Montenegro-Wales
06.09.03 .....Azerbaijan-Finland
06.09.03 .....Italy-Wales
10.09.03 .....Serbia & Montenegro-Italy
10.09.03 .....Wales-Finland
11.10.03 .....Italy-Azerbaijan
11.10.03 .....Wales-Serbia & Montenegro

**Serbia & Montenegro played first two qualifiers as Yugoslavia*

GROUP 9

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wales	4	4	0	0	10	1	12
Italy	5	3	1	1	8	3	10
Finland	6	2	0	4	6	8	6
Serbia & M'negro	5	1	2	2	6	8	5
Azerbaijan	6	1	1	4	4	14	4

Group 10

07.09.02 .....Russia-Rep Ireland.....4-2
08.09.02 .....Switzerland-Georgia 4-1
12.10.02 .....Albania-Switzerland.....1-1
16.10.02 .....Rep Ireland-Switzerland 1-2
16.10.02 .....Russia-Albania.....4-1
29.03.03 .....Albania-Russia.....3-1
29.03.03 .....Georgia-Rep Ireland.....1-2
02.04.03 .....Albania-Rep Ireland 0-0
02.04.03 .....Georgia-Switzerland 0-0
30.04.03 .....Georgia-Russia 1-0
07.06.03 .....Rep Ireland-Albania 2-1
07.06.03 .....Switzerland-Russia.....2-2
11.06.03 .....Rep Ireland-Georgia.....2-0
11.06.03 .....Switzerland-Albania.....3-2
06.09.03 .....Georgia-Albania
06.09.03 .....Rep Ireland-Russia
10.09.03 .....Albania-Georgia
10.09.03 .....Russia-Switzerland
11.10.03 .....Russia-Georgia
11.10.03 .....Switzerland-Rep Ireland

GROUP 10

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Switzerland	6	3	3	0	12	7	12
Rep Ireland	6	3	1	2	9	8	10
Russia	5	2	1	2	11	9	7
Albania	6	1	2	3	8	11	5
Georgia	5	1	1	3	3	8	4

- The 10 group winners qualify for the finals automatically; the 10 runners-up will play-off in five head-to-head, home and away ties, the winners of which also qualify.
- Portugal qualify automatically for the finals as hosts.
- Qualifying play-off dates: Nov 15, 2003; Nov 19, 2003.

Time, gentlemen!

The careers of two elder statesmen of Serie A are drawing to a close. Paddy Agnew reports

Going not so quietly...Baggio, at 36, believes he has one top-class season left

AS THE mid-summer transfer market drummed up its usual quota of fantasy, speculation and occasional purchase, there was time to spare a thought for two of Serie A's most famous old warriors – namely the 'Little Prince' Roberto Baggio and Argentinian ace Gabriel Batistuta.

After two desperately disappointing seasons, firstly with Roma and then since January with Internazionale, 34-year-old Batistuta would appear to have finally accepted the inevitable. Put simply, 'Batigol' is no longer the player he once was. For the past two seasons, he has been but a shadow of the man who for most of the 1990s was one of the greatest strikers in world football.

Speaking to Latin American TV channel America in an interview with his former Argentina team-mate Sergio Goycochea, Batistuta gave a serious hint that he may be about to hang up his boots. "Playing for sides likes Roma and Inter, which have games every three days, not only do I not have the time to recover from the problems with my right ankle but I simply am no longer able to pull off match-winning numbers," he said. "In short, my career at the highest level is over. Or indeed, perhaps my career is over."

Clearly Batistuta the player is on his way out. However, he could be back before long in an executive role as part of born-again Fiorentina. It is no secret he retains close ties with the city of Florence, where he played his best football during nine remarkable seasons. In the meantime, the lure of a £2million contract may well tempt him to Qatar club Al Arabi for one final fling before he returns to Italy. The fact that his wife Irina is due to give birth to their fourth child in Florence in October, however, serves as a reminder of the strength of the ties between the city and the Batistuta family.

While the Argentinian is thinking of retirement, Baggio, in contrast, intends to play on. At 36, he believes he still has one final, top-class season in his legs. To prove the seriousness of his belief, in mid-July he underwent the sixth operation of his injury-troubled career when having bone fragments removed from his right knee.

Baggio will not be ready for competitive action again, all being well, until mid-September. When he does return, it remains to be seen whether he will still be a Brescia player. His agent, Vittorio Petrone, says Baggio may yet consider a move elsewhere – notwithstanding three brilliantly successful seasons with Brescia – if the club do not buy serious reinforcements this summer.

Wherever Baggio does return to action, he will find his old comrade in arms, 66-year-old former Brescia coach Carlo Mazzone, missing. He parted company with the club at the end of the season, and may have come to the end of the road after 34 seasons as a professional coach.

Serie B turmoil

The Italian Football Federation continue to be haunted by difficulties following a series of court rulings that have obliged it to rewrite the final Serie B standings. As reported last month, Sicilian club Catania, originally relegated, resorted to the state magistrature to have their relegation overruled on the grounds that their 1-1 home draw with division winners Siena on April 12 was "irregular" because Siena fielded defender Davide Martinelli.

Martinelli missed Siena's previous Serie B game, against Napoli, because of suspension but, on the same day, turned out for the youth team. According to Catania, Martinelli broke federation rules by playing on a day he was meant to have served his ban.

Even though federation tribunals confirmed the result and Catania's relegation, various state courts have turned matters on their head, insisting Catania be re-admitted to Serie B. At press time, the matter was far from settled. In the end, however, it is likely next season's Serie B will feature 21 clubs rather than the usual 20, with Catania the extra club.

The probable delay in drawing up the Serie B calendar caused by the Catania affair may also delay the entire Italian season's start. Worse still, problems related to the setting-up of satellite TV channel Gioco Calcio could independently cause a similar stalled start.

Gioco Calcio is an offshoot of the Plus Media Trading consortium set up last summer by those smaller Serie A clubs (Atalanta, Como, Brescia etc) that had argued they were entitled to a fairer share of the pay-TV kitty. As they go into battle with the new colossus on the Italian pay-TV scene, Rupert Murdoch's Sky Italia, Gioco Calcio may ask for a 'time out' in order to get their fledgling house in order. According to a directive from the European Union's Anti-Trust commission, Sky Italia is obliged to collaborate with Gioco Calcio. Time will tell just how that will work out.

In the transfer market European champions Milan have been quiet, so far picking up only Cafu (out of contract at Roma). Juventus have been busier, with three useful purchases in Chievo defender Nicola Legrottaglie, Udinese's Ghanaian midfielder Stephen Appiah and Perugia striker Fabrizio Miccoli (actually a Juve player out on loan).

Inter, too, were busy. They hired Brazilian Luciano (on loan from Chievo), Dutchman Andy Van der Meyde (£4m from Ajax) and Auxerre's Senegal World Cup midfielder Khalilou Fadiga.

Roma signed Romania defender Cristian Chivu from Ajax for £12m, having previously had their eyes on both Legrottaglie and Bayer Leverkusen's World Cup-winning Brazilian defender Lucio.

Lazio, having found investors (to the tune of £40m) and held on to key players such as Serb Dejan Stankovic, Brazilian Cesar, Argentinian Claudio Lopez and Dutchman Jaap Stam, underlined the ambitions of coach Roberto Mancini by signing Chilean David Pizarro, Brazilian Alberto and Dane Martin Jorgensen (all Udinese) as well as Frenchman Ousmane Dabo and Luciano Zauri from Atalanta.

It is worth recalling that the biggest moves on the Italian market last season, involving players like Ronaldo, Hernan Crespo and Alessandro Nesta, all took place late in the summer. Stand by for more transfer action between now and the first week of September.

Reality check

New Barcelona coach Frank Rijkaard tells Stephen Burgen about the challenge facing him in Catalonia

BARCELONA are under new management – again. The record for the past four seasons reads: three presidents, five coaches, £120million on signings, and no trophies. If Barça are to prove they still deserve to be uttered in the same breath as Real Madrid, Manchester United and Milan, then they better come good this season or risk joining the crowded ranks of once-great clubs.

In June Joan Laporta played the Beckham card and won the presidency, even if few really believed that the England captain would resist the lure of Real Madrid. Unable to poach either Ronald Koeman from Ajax or Guus Hiddink from PSV Eindhoven, Laporta appointed Frank Rijkaard as coach, continuing the club's bumpy, 30-year love affair with Holland and, above all, with Ajax.

Rijkaard is the 23rd Dutchman to come to Barça, a line that began with Rinus Michels in 1971 and reached its peak with Johan Cruyff's five years as a player and eight as coach.

Rijkaard's record as a player is impressive: four Dutch and two Italian League titles, three European Cups, a European Championship and 73 caps for his country. As a coach, however, his experience is limited. He took Holland to third place at Euro 2000 but last year was unable to save Sparta Rotterdam from relegation.

He takes over at a club saddled with debts of £120m and whose feelings towards Dutchmen are at best ambivalent after the debacle of Louis Van Gaal's second stint as coach last season.

But Barça fans have stars in their eyes once again with the signing of the Brazilian Ronaldinho, who follows in the footsteps of the other three Rs – Romario, Ronaldo and Rivaldo. The fans' joy is all the greater because the player apparently snubbed Manchester United and chose Barcelona out of personal preference and not for financial reasons. Two thousand Ronaldinho shirts were sold on the day he was presented to the fans, bringing a smile to the faces of the merchandising men.

Rijkaard, 40, who looks as fit as he did as a player, says: "My main concern is not where to play Ronaldinho, because he can play anywhere. My concern is with the defence and midfield. Last season Barça didn't score enough goals and they let in too many."

Above all the coach would like to shore up the left side and also find a new central defender to partner Mexican Rafael Marquez, signed from Monaco, following the departure of fellow Dutchman Frank De Boer to Galatasaray. Meanwhile, the club have been clearing out the deadwood, the costly under-achievers signed during the reign of previous president Joan Gaspart. Brazilians Geovanni and Fabio Rochemback have been packed off to Benfica and Sporting Lisbon respectively, Gaizka Mendieta has been returned to Lazio, and French international Philippe Christanval has been allowed to leave on a free transfer to Marseille.

Rijkaard suggests there are others who are on a yellow card. "Most of the players have been together three or four years without winning anything," he says. "This is the last chance for some players to show they are able. If you want to change things you need players who are eager to come here and show they are great players."

Time to start winning

Above all, he says, you need to break the spiral of losing. He says the core of the team should be made up of Spanish and Catalan players, believing that if you have a multinational squad it is "difficult to create the same energy and same ideas about winning".

The last time Barça won anything was during Van Gaal's first stint, when he brought them two League titles and a Spanish Cup in three seasons. But the fans hated him because they felt short-changed on spectacle, the touchstone of Spanish football. "Italian football is very calculating because they always want to win, and if you don't win you haven't done a good job," Rijkaard says. "In Spain most teams play more with their heart."

For a man who seems too nice for the fickle, unforgiving world he has entered, Rijkaard is philosophical about Van Gaal's experience. "If people like you, OK, you have more credit, and if nobody likes you it's very difficult," he says. "But if you win you have power. The only thing that counts for a coach – because you're always alone, because you have to make the decisions – is to look in the mirror every day and ask yourself if you're convinced you're doing the right thing. If the answer is yes, then carry on."

He has the backing of his friend and mentor Cruyff, but one suspects he is more circumspect than Cruyff. Although there is little doubt that his heart is in the game, his approach is cautious. He appreciates that attacking football is wanted but to pull it off, he says, you need to defend from midfield, which you can do only if you can count on your defenders to pick up the pieces. "The reality is people in Barcelona are disillusioned and they want to win. You can have a philosophy but let's start with reality and let's try winning."

Import duty...Dutchman Frank Rijkaard, brought in by president Joan Laporta (right), knows he must bring trophies to Barcelona

Handy Andres...D'Alessandro brings pace and imagination to his new club

Wolfsburg stage a coup

D'Alessandro replaces Effenberg at the VW-backed club

THANKS to the economic horsepower provided by their backers at Volkswagen, once-unfashionable VfL Wolfsburg are making a habit of glamour signings. Last year, they recruited veteran ex-Bayern Munich midfield general Stefan Effenberg, only for his failing fitness and confrontational character to prompt a quickie divorce and a departure for Al Arabi in Qatar. But Wolfsburg were not to be deterred from enrolling an equally high-profile replacement in Andres D'Alessandro, the extravagantly-skilled young Argentina and River Plate playmaker whom Diego Maradona once described as his heir apparent.

Wolfsburg's swoop for the 22-year-old took many in Germany by surprise. Press reports had linked them with Argentinian attacking midfielders such as Federico Insua (Independiente), Luciano Figueroa (Rosario Central) and Ernesto Farias (Estudiantes), but when Wolfsburg general manager Peter Pander returned empty-handed from a trip to Argentina in June, the search for a South American new boy seemed at a dead-end.

In reality, Pander was laying a false trail. Contact had already been made with River Plate, as well as D'Alessandro's agent Marcelo Simonian, and while an initial offer to take the youngster on loan was rejected, a permanent deal was struck shortly after River clinched the 2003 Argentinian closing championship title. To River, a £6.5million fee, payable in two instalments; for D'Alessandro, a gift-wrapped package, including luxury car, dream house and £1m per year over a five-season contract.

"The Bundesliga is one of the best leagues in the world, and the Wolfsburg offer was a good one," said D'Alessandro. "I've been thinking about coming to Europe for a long time. Wolfsburg are a club that want to move forward, and that motivates me. Bit by bit I will have to learn what German football is all about. I know how to live with high expectations. It was no different in Argentina."

Buyer's market

So how did Wolfsburg manage to acquire one of the hottest properties in South America, a player who had been linked with countless top Serie A and Spanish Liga sides? It is true that Volkswagen's people in Argentina played an influential role in the negotiations and that the presence at Wolfsburg of two Argentinians – defender Pablo Quattrocchi and striker Diego Klimowicz – was an important selling point. Yet ultimately the most significant factor in Wolfsburg's favour was Europe's depressed transfer market. There was simply not enough money sloshing around in Italy or Spain and, in any case, recruiting agents there needed no reminding of how another young Argentinian midfielder with a big reputation, Juan Roman Riquelme, had flopped at Barcelona after moving from Boca Juniors a year ago.

Not that Wolfsburg fans will be concerning themselves with the whys and wherefores of the deal, even though the odds point to D'Alessandro moving on to a more prestigious club well before the end of his contract in 2008. D'Alessandro, a star of the Argentina side that won the 2001 World Youth Cup and with three senior caps, offers explosive bursts into opposition territory, imagination and goals. Such qualities will surely add another dimension to Wolfsburg's attacking play, while he has also proved himself a feisty competitor and a strong personality after skippering River Plate.

The vital question is whether he can adapt to life in the Bundesliga. Some claim he is too small and lightweight for German football. Others, such as new Schalke coach Jupp Heynckes, doubt his capacity to fit into a team pattern. "He only plays for himself," went the Heynckes verdict.

Inevitably, Wolfsburg coach Jurgen Rober has a different opinion, saying: "D'Alessandro has unbelievable talent. If he shows only a portion of the skills he has, we will be pleased. When he gets on the ball for us, he will be accepted immediately. Players of his class quickly find their feet."

Anxious to qualify for the Champions League as soon as possible and in the fortunate position of having VW as benefactor, Wolfsburg are one of the few Bundesliga clubs to have substantially increased their budget for the coming season (£30m last term, £39m this). Elsewhere, the only sound to be heard is that of belt-tightening as clubs struggle with much reduced television income following the crash of the Kirch media empire last year.

Free transfers and all manner of cost-cutting exercises have become mandatory, and nowhere is the chill wind of austerity blowing more fiercely than at Bayer Leverkusen, the Champions League runners-up of 2002, who only avoided relegation on the final day of last term. After slashing over £19m from their budget, the Rhinelanders have been busy pruning their squad and putting in place a salary structure based on lower basic wages and solid bonuses for finishing in the top six. Coach Klaus Augenthaler insists performance-related pay is the only way forward for German clubs in these harsh financial days. "It must be right that we only earn when we have results."

The fact that only four Bundesliga clubs – Schalke, Borussia Monchengladbach, relegated Arminia Bielefeld and 1860 Munich – made a profit last season tells its own sad story. Even Schalke, whose gains of £3.7m made them the most fiscally successful club in the country in 2002-03, have announced that management and board will take a pay cut of 10 per cent.

Bayern Munich, Germany's most marketable footballing brand, are also feeling the pinch. Having just revealed that the club only broke even last term, vice-president Karl-Heinz Rummenigge informed his players there will be no individual win bonuses during the group stage of this season's Champions League, just a dividend if they reach the next phase.

Times must be hard.

Nick Bidwell

Abramovich storms the Bridge

Gavin Hamilton on the Russian billionaire's ground-breaking acquisition of Chelsea

JUST when English football looked to be putting its financial house in order, along comes Roman Abramovich.

The calm of an uneventful transfer market – where financial reality has bitten hard – has been shattered by the arrival of the Russian oil baron, who has bought Chelsea for around £60 million and agreed to clear club debts of £80m-plus.

His actions could yet turn out to be the most significant event in English football since the advent of the Premier League and pay-TV more than a decade ago.

Suddenly, Chelsea, a club on the verge of collapsing under the weight of debt repayments, have no financial worries. They are now the major players in a transfer market where caution and consolidation had become the watchwords.

Abramovich's motivation is unclear. Some have suggested his Chelsea venture – immediately dubbed 'Chelski' – is a tax ruse to prevent the Russian authorities getting their hands on hugely valuable assets which the 36-year-old has acquired since the break-up of the Soviet Union.

Another theory is that he is looking at moving his wealth (said to be £4billion) out of Russia and investing it in the UK. His purchase of Chelsea allows the difficult questions about his background (alleged links to the mafia and KGB) to be dealt with before he makes bigger investments in the UK economy.

Whatever, Chelsea are in the money. Within a fortnight of Abramovich's arrival at Stamford Bridge, they had been linked with a veritable who's who of European football – and, most significantly, England coach Sven Goran Eriksson (see panel). The Swede was photographed entering Abramovich's London home with Pini Zahavi, the Israeli agent who is acting as the Russian's chief fixer/headhunter. Eriksson, comically, said that it was a social visit as the pair had known each other for some months.

Given that the coach does not speak Russian, and Abramovich has no English, the strong suspicion is that Eriksson was being tapped up to take over from Claudio Ranieri after Euro 2004, or earlier if England fail to qualify for next summer's finals.

Ranieri, meanwhile, has been left in an unenviable position. Last season he spent virtually nothing in the transfer market yet Chelsea beat high-spending Liverpool to a Champions League place. Now he finds himself commenting on player bids about which he has no knowledge. In addition, Abramovich has stated that he intends to play an active role in team selection.

The Italian is unlikely to be the only casualty of the extraordinary events at Stamford Bridge. The danger for other clubs is that Abramovich's millions will spark an inflationary explosion in transfer fees and wages that clubs such as Arsenal will be unable to afford.

The Russian's initial spending was concentrated on players with Premiership credentials – West Ham's teenage full-back Glen Johnson, Southampton full-back Wayne Bridge, Cameroon midfielder Geremi, and Blackburn's Republic of Ireland forward Damien Duff, the latter for a club record £17m.

The really big-name signings, though, had yet to materialise as we went to press. Juan Veron's wage demands proved excessive, while Arsenal were mulling over a £20m offer for Patrick Vieira (out of contract next year) after Chelsea set a mid-August deadline for the deal.

The search for fact among the Chelsea fiction overshadowed the other main stories of the summer, namely Harry Kewell's departure from Leeds and Manchester United's unsuccessful pursuit of Ronaldinho.

Leeds may have changed chairmen but their financial acumen remains in doubt. They received £3m for the sale of Kewell to Liverpool, who also paid £2m to Kewell's agent, Bernie Mandic.

Leeds chairman Professor John McKenzie, having received offers that matched his valuation of £7m from, among others, Arsenal and Man Utd, was angry at having to accept Kewell's determination to move to Liverpool. He said: "I am flabbergasted somebody who has been playing for Leeds, has been developed by Leeds, is paid an extraordinarily handsome wage, would renege on the fans and stab them in the back in this way."

Kewell turned down Leeds' offer of an improved contract, and the club knew he could leave for free if they did not accept Liverpool's lower bid. "Harry sent me a message himself saying he would sit out the season if I didn't agree," admitted McKenzie.

So Mandic is £2m richer, although FIFA are set to investigate the role of the unlicensed agent in the deal.

Ronaldinho's transfer from Paris Saint-Germain to, eventually, Barcelona was an even more protracted affair. Man Utd, having refused to meet PSG's final demand of £22m, were left without a big-name signing as they headed off on their tour of the USA. So far the champions' buys have been low-key – American keeper Tim Howard, Cameroon midfielder Eric Djemba Djemba, Brazilian World Cup winner Kleberson and Sunderland winger David Bellion.

Harry's game...Kewell in Liverpool strip after his controversial move from Leeds

Building the dream team

Since Roman Abramovich took over Chelsea, the club have been linked with bids for the following:

Goalkeeper
Nigel Martyn

Defenders
Glen Johnson - **SIGNED FOR £6m**
Alessandro Nesta
Wayne Bridge - **SIGNED FOR £7m**

Midfielders
Geremi - **SIGNED FOR £7m**
Edgar Davids
Patrick Vieira
Steven Gerrard
Juan Sebastian Veron
Jay-Jay Okocha
Joe Cole
Jermain Jenas
Kieron Dyer

Forwards
Christian Vieri
Patrick Kluivert
Andrii Shevchenko
Damien Duff - **SIGNED FOR £17m**
Rivaldo
Thierry Henry
Ronaldinho - SIGNED FOR BARCELONA
Wayne Rooney
Fernando Torres

Managers
Fabio Capello
Sven Goran Eriksson
Vicente Del Bosque

Down and out...keeper Rab Douglas is set to lose his Celtic starting place

SCOTLAND

All quiet on the Old Firm front

TRADITIONAL big spenders Rangers and Celtic have been conspicuous by their absence from the summer transfer market as they join the belt-tightening within the Scottish game.

Rangers fans, eager to see their club build on last season's clean sweep of domestic trophies, were encouraged by the news that former chairman David Murray had offered a cash injection of some £15 million. However, it soon became apparent that this funding was earmarked for working capital as opposed to player expenditure. Meanwhile, manager Alex McLeish has seen his squad depleted by the departures of Lorenzo Amoruso, Arthur Numan, Claudio Caniggia and Bert Konterman.

Rangers' only significant signing has been striker Nuno Capucho from Porto, although they were hopeful of also acquiring Georgia defender Zurab Khizanishvili from Dundee.

Celtic have been even quieter, although there is a change on the cards in the goalkeeping pecking order. Manager Martin O'Neill is to demote Scotland No 1 Rab Douglas to a reserve role after his mediocre performance during the UEFA Cup Final against Porto. His starting place will go to Swede Magnus Hedman.

Aberdeen have welcomed back former Scotland striker Scott Booth, who has spent the past six years in Germany and Holland, while Hibernian have captured former Aberdeen and Newcastle midfielder Stephen Glass.

Alan Fairley

WALES

Welshpool reprieved

WELSHPOOL TOWN will compete in the top division next season after the FA backed down over its demands that the club, who finished 17th out of 18 last season, be relegated. This was despite the fact that second-level Neath were to be refused promotion because they did not have a suitable stadium for top-flight football.

However, the FA relented after they met a wall of opposition from Welshpool, the vast majority of the other clubs and the League.

Mel Thomas

N IRELAND

Omagh fall at the first

INTERTOTO CUP contenders Omagh Town fell at the first hurdle, going down 7-1 on aggregate to Belarus side Shakhtyor Soligorsk.

Ards, who will ground-share with First Division Bangor next season, have signed strikers Darren Fitzgerald (Glentoran) and George O'Boyle (Glenavon), plus Hong Kong midfielder David Williamson and former Cliftonville full-back Ronan Scannell.

Ballymena United have picked up three ex-Linfield players – forward Justin McBride and midfielders Jamie Marks and Garth Scates. Paul Dalglish, son of Kenny, has joined Linfield after a loan spell at English side Scunthorpe.

Keith Gillespie, who recently joined Leicester from Blackburn, has been voted Northern Ireland international player of the season.

Roy Kitson

Essien enters Lyon limelight

THE arrival of Ghana midfielder Mickael Essien at Lyon from Bastia gives the champions an embarrassment of riches. The 20-year-old, who appeared to be on his way to Paris Saint-Germain earlier this summer only to turn them down, offers athleticism and stamina coupled with superb distribution and incisive attacking runs.

His attributes may mean that the clever Vikash Dhorasoo is moved further upfield, so it could be Brazilian Juninho Pernambucano whose starting place comes under most pressure, despite his fine performances last term.

PSG's consolation for missing out on Essien was the signature of prolific Portugal striker Pauleta from Bordeaux and Cameroon midfielder Modeste Mbami from Sedan as Ronaldinho finally decided to leave for Barcelona.

Egyptian forward Ahmed Hossam arrived at Marseille from Celta Vigo, where he had been banished by Ajax for disciplinary reasons. Another African forward, Ivorian Bonaventure Kalou, is added to Auxerre's strikeforce, from Feyenoord.

Major departures include Senegal midfielder Khalilou Fadiga, from Auxerre to Internazionale, Mexican defender Rafael Marquez from Marseille to Barcelona, and Brazilian forward Sonny Anderson from Lyon to Villarreal in Spain

Andre Duclos

Rich pickings...Mickael Essien will give Lyon another dimension in midfield

Dutch devaluation

The League has been badly weakened by sales abroad, writes Klaas-Jan Droppert

HOLLAND

THE Eredivisie, Holland's top division, will be greatly devalued next season after the departure from Holland of a string of top players. Feyenoord and Ajax have been particularly hit by the exodus.

Pierre Van Hooijdonk's move to Turkey's Fenerbahce from Feyenoord has made the biggest headlines and, as has been a feature of his career, came after a disagreement.

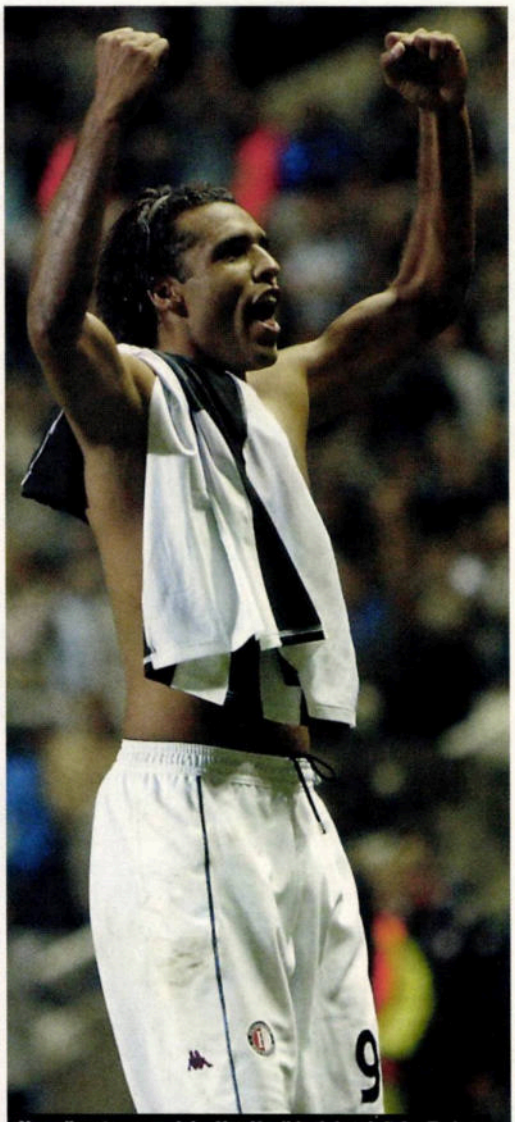
The dispute this time centred on his wages. As mutually agreed with Feyenoord when he signed in summer 2001, Van Hooijdonk's salary was to be reduced by half in his third season at the club, 2003-04. However, over recent months the forward, aware of his key position, stipulated he would go along with the original deal as long as he was offered a fourth season on full salary. Feyenoord, in financial trouble, were not willing to commit themselves, so their top striker is on his way to Istanbul.

Brett Emerton is also leaving the club, having finally found a place in the Premier League at Blackburn; Ivory Coast winger Bonaventure Kalou has joined Auxerre; and Poland left-back Tomasz Rzasa is moving to Partizan Belgrade. Feyenoord's newcomers are Dirk Kuijt (Utrecht), Danko Lazovic (Partizan Belgrade), Jean (Atletico Paranaense) and Peter Van der Berg (RKC Waalwijk) – the latter reunited with his parents, who work at Feyenoord.

Over in Amsterdam, Ajax are paying the price for last season's impressive Champions League campaign as their top players are snapped up by big foreign clubs. The most serious blow is the departure of Romanian skipper Cristian Chivu to Roma for an Ajax club record £12.9million.

Andy Van der Meyde is also heading for Italy, with Internazionale, while Egyptian striker Ahmed Hossam, exiled to Celta Vigo last season because of disciplinary problems, has been sold to Marseille. Veteran Richard Witschge has also been squeezed out and midfielder Richard Knopper has been loaned to Heerenveen. Belgium striker Wesley Sonck has arrived from Genk, while Rennes' Julien Escude will play in central defence.

Vitesse Arnhem defender Dejan Stefanovic and Utrecht keeper Harald Wapenaar have moved to England with Premier League newcomers Portsmouth.



New dispute, new club...Van Hooijdonk has left for Turkey

Sign here...Sonck joins Ajax

BELGIUM

Leekens back at Mouscron

GEORGES LEEKENS, who made Mouscron fashionable in Belgium, has returned to the little club close to the French border.

With considerable help from the Mpenza brothers, Leekens took Mouscron into the top flight and then into Europe for the first time before taking the national team job.

He resigned after failing to take Belgium beyond the group stage of the 1998 World Cup, going on to lead Lokeren, Roda JC in Holland and then the Algerian national team. He now returns to Mouscron as successor to Lorenzo Staelens, his captain during the national team years.

There have been two other close season coaching changes to date. Royal Antwerp have called on their former player Rene Desaeyere, recently coach of Second Division Denderleeuw, to replace Henk Houwaart. Germinal Beerschot have appointed Marc Brijs, who led Berchem Sport to the Third Division championship last season. Their failure to achieve Second Division status for financial reasons may well have triggered Brijs' departure.

Two of last season's leading scorers have left Belgium. Joint top marksman Wesley Sonck snubbed Anderlecht to join Ajax from Genk for £3.5million, while Ole-Martin Arst returned to Norway and struggling Tromso from Standard Liege.

Anderlecht's consolation was securing the return of Par Zetterberg from Olympiakos. They have also signed another Swede, Christian Wilhelmsson, who scored against them for Norway's Stabaek in the UEFA Cup last season. The mauve and whites have also taken on keeper Jan Van Steenberghe, who was outstanding for La Louviere in the Cup-winning run last term.

Champions Brugge's newcomers include Croatian second-string international keeper Tomislav Butina, Czech youth international central defender David Rozenahl and Serbian wing-back Ivan Gvozdenovic.

Arst is only one of a number of departures from Standard. The others include Belgium midfielder Johann Walem (Torino) and Harold Meyssen (promoted Cercle Brugge). The club's most notable new signing is Jurgen Cavens, returning to Belgium from Twente in Holland.

Nicholas Harling

PORTUGAL

Departure door wide open

THERE has been a major exodus of players from Portugal this summer. Among the most notable departures were young FC Porto forward Helder Postiga to Tottenham, his club and international team-mate Nuno Capucho to Rangers, and Sporting Lisbon's teenage winger Ricardo Quaresma to Barcelona.

Capucho is an experienced player who should adapt well to life with the Scottish champions. There is more of a question mark over how Helder Postiga will fare in North London since his style may not be suited to the Premiership and its pitch conditions during the winter.

Other departures include Ljubinko Drulovic from Benfica to Partizan Belgrade and Uniao Leiria midfielder Silas to promoted Wolves in England.

There have been some movements within Portugal, however. Sporting playmaker Ricardo Fernandes has joined Porto in a

swap deal with Brazilian Clayton, and the UEFA Cup holders have also taken on Brazilian winger Serginho, out of contract at Boavista, international midfielder Pedro Mendes from Vitoria Guimaraes, and South African striker Benni McCarthy, back at Porto after a spell at Celta Vigo in Spain. Boavista have also lost striker Elpidio Silva to Sporting.

Benfica's Spanish coach, Jose Antonio Camacho, has extended his stay for another year, but is said to be unhappy at the lack of funds for new players.

Alberto da Silva

Off to Rangers...Nuno Capucho

SWITZERLAND

Sion given Second chance

SION were set to kick off the season in the Second Division after winning an appeal against a League licensing commission decision to demote them to the inter-regional Liga 1.

The club, once the standard bearers of football in the Alpine region, appeared to have won a reprieve after an independent arbitration tribunal stated procedural errors had been made when the commission reached its original decision.

Last season Sion were demoted from the top flight to the Second Division because of their parlous financial state. Two other former top-level sides, the renamed AC Lugano and FC Lausanne-Sport, have been allowed to continue in the inter-regional Liga 2 championship with under-21 sides after also being demoted because of massive debts.

Switzerland defender Bernt Haas has joined English First Division side West Brom, having spent last season at Basle on loan from Sunderland. At the same time, Basle appear to have missed out on the widely-anticipated signature of Grasshopper striker Richard Nunez, last season's League top scorer.

Ivar von Rulach

Round-up

Austrian champions lose first time out

AUSTRIAN Double winners Austria Wien suffered a shock defeat in their first League game of the new season, going down 2-1 at Karnten.

It was sweet revenge for Karnten, who lost to Austria by the same score in the Supercup four days earlier.

Harry Miltner

Shelbourne established a seven-point lead at the top of the table in the **REPUBLIC OF IRELAND** after back-to-back wins at Longford and home to Drogheda and then a 0-0 draw at title challengers St Patrick's Athletic.

Shamrock Rovers reached the second round of a European competition for the first time in 21 years when they beat Polish club Odra Wodzislaw in their opening InterToto Cup tie. However, they were then beaten 4-0 on aggregate by Czechs Slovan Liberec

Sean Creedon

LIECHTENSTEIN'S top side, Vaduz, have strengthened their prospects of promotion to the Swiss top division by signing national team captain Daniel Hasler from Swiss side Wil 1900. Other new faces at Vaduz, who reached the Swiss League promotion play-offs last season, are Benjamin Fischer and fellow international Fabio D'Elia, both from Chur 97.

Leaving the club are Ronny Buchel and Christof Ritter, who have signed for Chur, and Renato Brugnoli, who has returned to Winterthur.

Former Swiss international Hans Peter Zwicker has replaced Rene Pauritsch as coach of Eschen Mauren.

Graeme Crawford

Pro-file Wesley Sneijder

Ajax shooting star already in the Holland set-up

TO SAY that Wesley Sneijder made a slow start to last season would be the understatement of the year. Back in December 2002, the teenage midfielder was playing in the relative anonymity of Ajax reserves. But all was to change in a few months. In the second half of the campaign Sneijder would claim a place in the first team, play against Milan in the Champions League quarter-finals and make his debut for the Dutch national team.

Not that the 19-year-old's sudden rise to prominence would have come as a surprise to those who know him well. Born and bred in Utrecht – just like his idol, Marco Van Basten – Sneijder learnt his skills in the street and was so good that he was invited to join the famous Ajax youth academy at the age of just seven.

Sneijder was voted the best youth team player in the country last year and also appeared for Ajax reserves in the 2001-02 Dutch Cup semi-final against Utrecht. For the opening months of the 2002-03 season, he was again with the B team, but shortly before the winter break he was promoted to the seniors by coach Ronald Koeman.

When the championship resumed, Sneijder found himself regularly in the starting line-up, and what a mark he was to make. The teenager confidently took on the role of set-piece expert, and even more astonishing was his ability to take them with either foot, a rarity in the modern game. "Originally I was right-footed," says Sneijder. "But since the day I started training with Ajax, I have used both feet. Now it doesn't matter which one I use. More important is the position of your body in relation to the ball."

Sneijder has plenty of pace and vision, too, and although he is rather short and slight of build, he is hard to knock off the ball. Nor is scoring goals a problem. He notched four in 17 League matches last term and is particularly dangerous when cutting in from either flank, perfectly able to curl the ball into the top corner from outside the box.

His mature performances impressed everybody, including national coach Dick Advocaat, who gave him his first cap after just 12 League games, using him as a second-half substitute in a friendly with Portugal in April.

In a short space of time, Sneijder has gained more experience than many players accumulate in an entire career, and, in theory, it could quite easily turn his head. However, the reassuring news is that the teenage midfielder seems to be one to keep his feet on the ground. It makes you wonder what he has in store for the football world in his first full season.

Klaas-Jan Droppert

Fact file

Club Ajax
Country Holland
Born June 9, 1984, in Utrecht
International debut April 2003, v Portugal
International caps 1 (0 goals)

Rosenborg boss calls for Nordic superleague

Sigurd Odegaard on yet another season of domestic dominance for the Trondheim club

Looking for improvement...Aage Hareide

NORWAY

AS the League went into the two-week July break, Rosenborg had established an apparently unassailable nine-point lead over second-placed Sogndal. The Trondheim club had dropped only four points all season – after two draws from 12 games – and were unbeaten in all 25 matches played this year.

Rosenborg's domestic superiority – they are on course for their 12th consecutive title – has led coach Aage Hareide to call for the formation of a Nordic superleague. "The best clubs could have their own league in addition to playing in their national leagues," said Hareide. "This would give us an opportunity to improve even further, but I would not be willing to take away the charm of playing in the national league as well."

Rosenborg have continued to strengthen their squad ahead of their Champions League campaign by signing Under-21 international Jan Gunnar Solli from Odd Grenland. Sogndal, meanwhile, have taken on Ousman Nyan from relegated French side Ajaccio.

Tromso, second from bottom at the break, have sealed the return of Ole-Martin Arst. The striker, who left the club in 1996, was prolific for Standard Liege in Belgium last season.

In other moves, Brann have re-signed midfielder Raymond Kvisvik from Austria Wien, Viking have taken on ex-Molde player Andre Schei Lindbaek after a brief spell in Spain, and another former Molde man, Ardian Gashi, has joined Valerenga from Second Division Orn-Horten.

DENMARK

Pedersen plots Farum revolution

DENMARK has had its own mini-version of the Chelsea revolution after entrepreneur Allan K Pedersen took over Farum and began plotting a new era for soccer in the Superliga.

The club, which emerged from non-league only five years ago, was swiftly renamed FC NordSjaelland, a move they hope will make them the choice of fans across the north of Denmark's largest island.

Pedersen and his consortium have pledged to pump millions of kroner into making the club credible long-term challengers to the heavyweights of FC Copenhagen and Brondby.

Farum had already shocked the country by finishing third in the table last season, their first in the Superliga, thus qualifying for the UEFA Cup. Now the stakes have been raised even higher by Pedersen, whose ambition is to make them the strongest club in the country.

Farum, a suburb in the north of Copenhagen, have had a small fan base with little prospect of it increasing. Pedersen hopes the change will help the club cash in on the boom in Superliga attendances. They were up 34 per cent last season, but Farum's home gates averaged just over 3,000 despite their success.

Jim Holden

SWEDEN

Ijeh back with a bang

MALMO shook off their patchy start to the season by registering five straight wins in the League. The run, which put the club up among the championship challengers, included a 2-0 away win over title holders and recent leaders Djurgardens.

Malmo's revival has been mainly due to the return of their Nigerian forward Peter Ijeh, last season's top scorer, after an injury. Ijeh has been unstoppable, together with his partner Niklas Skoog, who had 11 goals after the first 13 rounds.

As expected, Djurgardens lost their star striker Johan Elmander back to Holland's Feyenoord, who refused to extend his loan period. Meanwhile, Djurgardens have signed Finnish international stopper Toni Kuivasto from Viking of Norway.

In another significant move, IFK Gothenburg brought back stopper Magnus 'Olme' Johansson from Holland's Groningen.

Promoted Osters have sacked Russian coach Yevgeni Kuznetsov with the team seemingly unable to break out of the relegation zone.

Pentti Hietanen

FINLAND

'Rugby' Ryan takes wing

TITLE challengers FC MyPa have found an unlikely star in South African winger Ryan Botha. The 22-year-old, whose background is in rugby rather than football, has scored five times in the League and shown some deft moves.

MyPa produced their best performance of the season to date by beating HJK Helsinki 2-0 at home in early July. HJK's slip allowed FC Haka to go top of the League.

Bottom side Kuopio replaced coach Jari Pyykola with Ismo Lius.

Pentti Hietanen

ICELAND

Caretaker duo go full-time

THE national team's two Euro 2004 qualifying wins in June were enough to propel the FA into a sharp U-turn from its "Icelanders need not apply" policy. The supposedly caretaker duo of Asgeir Sigurvinsson and Logi Olafsson have now been handed a two-year contract, taking them up until the end of the next World Cup qualifying campaign in autumn 2005.

Rab Christie

Unstoppable...Malmo's Peter Ijeh

LETTERS

Man United are the only real money-makers

I AM a long-standing reader of *World Soccer* and read your world club Rich List (July issue) with interest.

The only club that should be on the list are Manchester United. Most of the other clubs are in debt: Lazio (13th) are over £250million in debt; they will be lucky if they can afford the registration process to enter Serie A next season and they could end up like Fiorentina.

Real Madrid might have high revenue but it was only two years ago that Madrid council bought their training ground for £200m and then built them a new one for free.

The Milan clubs are both in debt but are owned by the two richest men in Italy, who could bail them out if anything went wrong.

As for Juventus, they are owned by the family who own Fiat, a car company on its last legs.

The only club in the world to make any kind of profit is Manchester United.

Niall Regan, by e-mail

***GAVIN HAMILTON** replies:* First and foremost, the Rich List was not about which club is the most profitable. Football is a sport where achievement should not be measured by profits.

The only accurate way to measure a club's wealth is by measuring their income from TV, sponsorship, merchandising and ticket sales. We estimated Real Madrid to be the biggest, ahead of Man United.

As for the indebted clubs, it is highly unlikely Lazio, in their present financial state, will make next year's list.

Celtic sideswipe was peevish

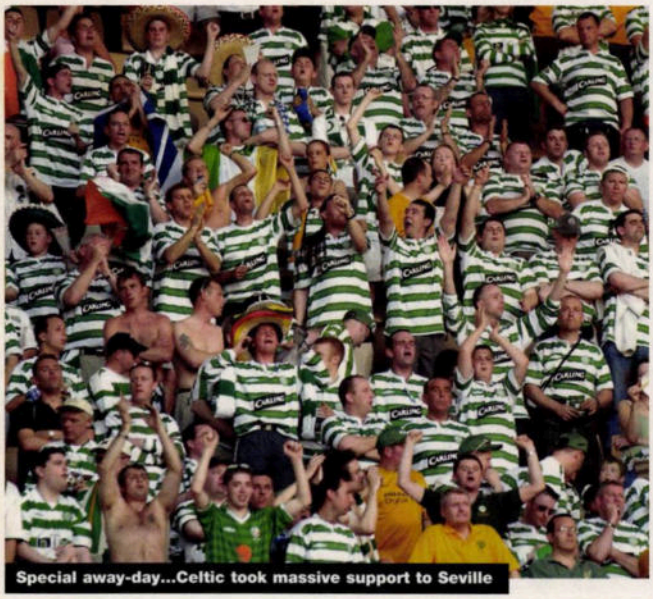
I AM offended by your nasty, gratuitous sideswipe at Celtic in the final paragraph of your reply to Mr Murray (Letters, August). It struck me as a peevish reaction to someone who dared to criticise your magazine's coverage of the UEFA Cup Final.

It is remarkable you can be so dismissive of the UEFA Cup and, particularly, of a club which took to Seville the largest travelling support ever to have been assembled for a single match.

Patrick Woods, subscriber, by e-mail

***GAVIN HAMILTON** replies:* A peevish reaction would have been to not publish such a critical letter. I stand by my view of the UEFA Cup – the competition is a shadow of its former self. The last three UEFA Cup Finals have featured 19 goals, compared to five in the corresponding Champions League Finals. Entertaining, yes, but quality? I don't think so.

Celtic are to be congratulated on taking so many fans to Seville, but *World Soccer* has never based its coverage on how many supporters a club has. If we did, you would be forced to read about Manchester United, Real Madrid, Juventus…and precious little else.



Special away-day...Celtic took massive support to Seville

Please mark your correspondence 'Letters page' and send to:
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Fax: +44 (0) 20 7261 7474
E-mail: worldsoccerletters@ipcmedia.com

CROSSWORD mitre

WIN a top-quality Mitre football

Mitre has kindly donated a top-quality football as first prize for this month's crossword. The first correct entry selected at random after August 29 will win the ball. Five runners-up will each win a *World Soccer Yearbook*. SEND YOUR ENTRY TO: SUMMER CROSSWORD, *World Soccer*, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS.

ACROSS

1 Frankenstadion club relegated this year from the Bundesliga (8)
7 Juve veteran – a sub for Camoranesi in this year's Champions League Final (5)
8 Star striker of Brazil's Vitoria (5)
9 Coach of Roda JC last season (5)
10 Moscow's old army club going well in the Russian League (4)
13 Coach returning to Gil Vicente as Oliveira's successor (4)
14 French striker dismissed by Besiktas before the Turkish title was won (5)
17 Left-sided Schalke and Germany midfielder (5)
18 Scottish manager at the Everton helm (5)
19 Bergamo club relegated from Serie A via a play-off this year (8)

DOWN

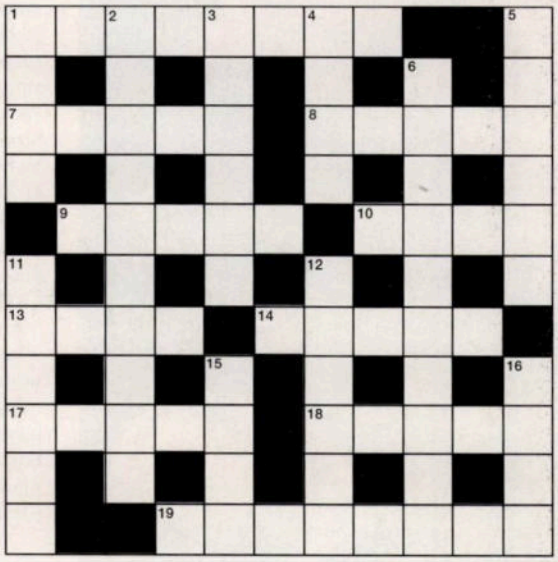
1 Rohr's side which comfortably survived life in France's Ligue 1 (4)
2 Brazilian star at PSG for the past two seasons (10)
3 German city in which the Weserstadion is sited (6)
4 Canadian centre-back who joined Norway's Sogndal in 2002 (4)
5 Republic of Ireland right-back recruited by Liverpool (6)
6 Home ground of Galatasaray (3,4,3)
11 Swedish club whose Eyravallen pitch has an artificial surface (6)
12 Belgian club recently demoted to the lower divisions after going into liquidation (6)
15 Belgian Cup winners in 1964 and 1984 (4)
16 Suat ----, Galatasaray central defender once based in Holland (4)

JULY SOLUTION

Across: 7 Loose, 8 Reina, 9 Brocchi, 10 Leo, 11 Rost, 13 Raul, 17 Ceh, 18 Everson, 20 Keane, 21 Lembi.
Down: 1 Kleber, 2 Yobo, 3 Reich, 4 Ergic, 5 Bielsa, 6 Kapo, 12 Schaaf, 14 Lonnis, 15 Mexes, 16 Meola, 17 CSKA, 19 Semb.

JULY WINNERS

1st prize: David Munt, Hampshire.
5 runners-up: Stephen Fishlock, Middlesex; Robert Smithson, London; Scott Verchin, Connecticut, USA; Jose Pierrend, Illinois, USA; Arwa Ali Al-Yahyai, Dhahra, Oman.



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POSTCODE _____

SUMMER (photocopied coupons are acceptable)

Daum begins building work

Suna Erdem on the German coach's efforts to revive Fenerbahce's fortunes

TURKEY

Keeping the faith...Fener striker Tuncay Sanli is staying on

DESPITE the arrival of a number of high-profile players, the biggest foreign transfer in the Turkish League so far this summer has been Christoph Daum, the new Fenerbahce coach.

The German, who won the championship with Besiktas in 1995, was persuaded to leave his post with Austrian champions Austria Wien to rescue Fener from one of their grimmest periods.

Daum has set about rebuilding the team, with the most high-profile signing to date being 33-year-old striker Pierre Van Hooijdonk from Feyenoord for an estimated £650,000. The Dutchman has yet to settle in, as shown by his poor performances in pre-season friendlies, but it is hoped he will form a strong partnership with rising star Tuncay Sanli.

Tuncay's decision to stay at the club despite huge interest from abroad following his strong showing in the national team was a boost following the departure of international goalkeeper Rustu Recber to Barcelona.

It is all change, too, at Galatasaray, whose Ali Sami Yen stadium is undergoing refurbishment. This season they will play home games way out of town in the new Olympic stadium, and decided that to lure fans that far they would need to sign a big star. The result was the arrival of veteran Holland defender Frank De Boer, who quit Barcelona over a contractual disagreement. The 33-year-old's impressive early form and the fact he has already begun to speak some Turkish have pleased Galatasaray-watchers no end.

More controversially, coach Fatih Terim has drafted in striker Hakan Sukur, another veteran, as part of his effort to take Gala back to the top after last season's disappointing showing. The move has caused scepticism among the fans, who are doubtful that the national team record scorer can regain his form after struggling through unhappy stints at Internazionale, Parma and Blackburn. Hakan is an emotional player, however, and for once this could work in his favour if he finds himself buoyed by the interest and affection of Turkish supporters once more.

At the other end of the scale, 19-year-old Romanian defender Gabriel Tamas, bought from Dinamo Bucharest, is being billed as a future star for Gala.

Champions Besiktas have gone for less flashy, but possibly more appropriate purchases. Under-21 winger Okan Koc, from Genclerbirligi, brings new talent to the side and also provides a solution to the troublesome right flank position. Another Under-21 player, the speedy Sinan Kaloglu from Altay, will bolster striking options, while Egyptian midfielder Ahmed Hassan, from Genclerbirligi, could form a potent partnership with last season's hero, Sergen Yalcin.

There have been serious worries, however, over national team striker Ilhan Mansiz, who had a miserable time last season due to injury and loss of form. Public rows with the club and reports of long-term injury led temperamental general manager Sinan Engin to pronounce the striker's career was over – which Ilhan denies. If he doesn't make it back, Mircea Lucescu's Besiktas will be seriously lacking up front.

Peace offering...Pantelis Kafes

GREECE

Foreign pair salvage Aris

A SAUDI sheikh, Khalid Al-Qassimi, and Spaniard Juan Pedro Benali have taken a controlling interest in financially-troubled Aris Salonika, who were recently threatened with relegation since a number of players are owed money from last season.

The duo, who have bought 87 per cent of the First Division club's shares, announced a £1.3 million payment had been made to cancel outstanding debts.

Champions Olympiakos have given Ukrainian coach Oleg Protasov a one-year contract extension. Protasov joined the Piraeus club midway through last season in succession to Srecko Katanec and led the team to their seventh straight League crown.

On the transfer front, Olympiakos have signed two international midfielders from PAOK Salonika – Pantelis Kafes and Giorgios Georgiadis. Kafes thus becomes a team-mate of French midfielder Christian Karembeu, who was sent off for throwing a punch at him during an Olympiakos-PAOK

game last season. However, Kafes says: "This has been forgotten now. I will greet all the players and of course Karembeu. For me that affair is over and I hope the same is true with him."

Olympiakos have also signed Polish striker Marcin Kuzba from Wisla Krakow, while Panathinaikos have hired South Africa defender Nasief Morris from Aris Salonika, striker Dimitris Papadopoulos from English club Burnley, and Croatian midfielder Silvio Maric from Dinamo Zagreb.

Lou Economopoulos

SERBIA & MONTENEGRO

Petkovic returns after Bora backs out

ILIJA PETKOVIC has been named as national team coach for the second time after the FA's preferred candidate, Bora Milutinovic, turned down the offer, citing family reasons. Many observers believe, however, that the former United States and China coach rejected the FA's advances since the poor state of the domestic game makes the national team job too risky.

Petkovic, 57, who led the team for six months during the 2000-01 season, is taking charge for at least the three remaining Euro 2004 qualifiers. But FA president Dragan Stojkovic hopes Petkovic will stay on as a long-term solution.

Petkovic, a former Yugoslav international, quit the national post in controversial circumstances first time round. Ostensibly his departure came because of the uncertainty caused by rows between the Yugoslav FA and the FA of Montenegro. However, at about the same time, Petkovic accepted a lucrative offer to take charge of Chinese club Shanghai Shenhua.

Partizan Belgrade's hopes of making progress in the Champions League have suffered a blow with the departure of two key players – Zvonimir Vukic to Shakhtar Donetsk and young striker Danko Lazovic to Feyenoord – while Goran Trobok is still looking for a new club. The new arrivals are Obilic defender Nenad Djordjevic, ex-international Ljubinko Drulovic (Benfica) and Polish left-back Tomasz Rzasa (Feyenoord).

Vladimir Novak

CROATIA

Duo leave on the cheap

HAJDUK SPLIT have failed to bring in the expected cash from the sales of two of their best players – goalkeeper Stipe Pletikosa and midfielder Dario Srna – since there were no takers among Europe's biggest leagues.

In the end, the duo both signed for Shakhtar Donetsk in Ukraine for a combined £1.5million – hardly the sort of money players of their international quality would normally be expected to attract.

The moves have not gone down well, either, with national team coach Otto Baric, who said: "It's not a good thing our best players are leaving for some less important European leagues. I'm greatly concerned about how it is going to affect their form. After all the Ukrainian League is not a hard one; Kyiv Dynamo and Shakhtar are easy winners of almost every match."

His words are borne out by the form of Jerko Leko and Goran Sablic, two young Croat internationals who joined Kyiv Dynamo over the past year. It can hardly be said that they have improved as players since moving to Ukraine.

There have been a number of returnees to Croat football. FC Zagreb have signed veteran Robert Prosinecki from Olimpija Ljubljana in Slovenia and Antonio Franja from Turkey's Bursaspor, while Hajduk have taken on Tomislav Rukavina from Venezia and Tomislav Erceg from his stay in Japan.

Zdravko Reic

I'm back...Ilija Petkovic begins his second spell as Serbia & Montenegro coach

Round-up

Jedinstvos get it together

IMPROVING relationships between the ethnic groupings within **BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA** have taken concrete form in the town of Brcko, where the two teams called Jedinstvo – one Serbian, one Bosnian/Croat – have agreed to merge. The board now comprises six Muslims, six Serbs and three Croatians, with the presidency set to 'rotate' between the groupings every three months. Next season the united Jedinstvo will compete in the top division in the internal Serb Republic Srpska, from which the champions gain promotion to the national top division.

The national championship, reduced to 16 clubs from 20 for 2003-04, is to be even further streamlined. There will be just 14 top-flight participants in 2004-05 and 12 the following season.

Zdravko Reic

Mura, the formerly unheralded **SLOVENIAN** side from Murska Sobota, are now being hailed as title contenders following the surprise arrival of former Croatia coach Miroslav Blazevic.

Backed by the spending power of president Georg Suban, Blazevic has already bought in seven players, and the new-look team impressed in beating Croatia's Hajduk Split 2-1 in a recent friendly.

Olimpija have provided financial guarantees for city neighbours FC Ljubljana, who were threatened with demotion because their players were owed money. Although the sum involved was only £7,500, the Slovenian authorities have been very strict on the issue and docked points from Ljubljana last season. Olimpija's action means their neighbours can play in the top flight this season.

Zdravko Reic

Robert Popov, the **MACEDONIAN** Player of the Year in 2001 and 2002, has joined Bulgaria's Litex Lovech from Belasica. The 21-year-old international midfielder had an unsuccessful spell at Shinnik earlier this year before rejoining Belasica.

Michel Stojmanovski

Greece defender Giorgios Amanatidis has signed for **CYPRIOT** side APOEL Nicosia after being released by Olympiakos Piraeus. He replaces now-retired compatriot Marinos Ouzounidis.

APOEL's new coach, Czech Dusan Uhrin, has also brought in compatriot Tomas Votava from 1860 Munich and Polish forward Wojciech Kowalczyk. The latter is back in Cyprus a few months after being released by Anorthosis.

Omonia Nicosia captured Slovakian Jozef Kozlej from city rivals Olympiakos, who in turn signed former Germany striker Paulo Rink and Slovenia's Miran Pavlin.

Soulis Theodosiou

Sliema Wanderers and **MALTESE** national team captain Noel Turner was a deserving winner of the Player of the Season award. The 28-year-old was exemplary as he led his club to their first Premier League title for six years.

Sliema have shown their determination to keep the title by signing internationals Daniel Bogdanovic and Stefan Giglio, from Bulgaria's Cherno More Varna and CSKA Sofia respectively. Former Pieta Hotspurs duo Lee Lombardi and Jamie Pace have also signed for the Blues.

Hibernians failed to get beyond the first round of the InterToto Cup, going out 2-1 on aggregate to Finnish side FC Allianssi.

Domenico Aquilina

Schuster makes winning start

Oleg Zadernovsky reports on the opening day of the new season

UKRAINE

NEW Shakhtar Donetsk coach Bernd Schuster got off to a winning start as his team impressively beat Metalurh Zaporizhzhya 3-0 away on the first day of the new League season.

The former Germany midfielder had taken charge only 12 days before, having departed Spanish Second Division side Xerex.

However, Schuster knows there is still plenty of work to do. "My priority is to find an understanding with the players about the way we play," he says. "My concept of play is very simple. We have to score three goals in the first half and not worry about the final outcome in the second. Another main problem is the lack of a common language within the team."

There are currently 11 nationalities in the Shakhtar squad, with a number of new signings adding to the mix. Serb playmaker Zvonimir Vukic has arrived from Partizan Belgrade, Croat keeper Stipe Pletikosa and midfielder Dario Srna from Hajduk Split, and Romania defender Razvan Rat (see profile, opposite) from Rapid Bucharest.

Only Nigerian defender Isaac Okoronkwo has left the club, bound for England with promoted Wolverhampton Wanderers.

Schuster made special note of the Vukic signing, saying: "He is the kind of player who can generate ideas. Vukic is very skilful, with an excellent first touch and a powerful shot."

Shakhtar's first-day victory did not give them top spot, however. That went to reigning champions Kyiv Dynamo, who demolished Volyn 5-1.

Unlike their main rivals, Dynamo were unusually quiet in the transfer market. They signed only Oleg Husev from Arsenal Kyiv, though, significantly, they secured the services of Belarus stars Valentin Bialkevich and Alexander Khatskevich for another three years.

Metalurh Zaporizhzhya, who finished in the relegation zone last season, won a reprieve after Olexandria were demoted because of their dire financial situation.

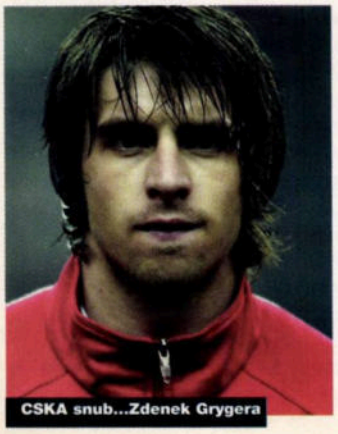
Ideas man...Serb Vukic has impressed Schuster

CZECH REPUBLIC

Grygera to go?

STRIKER Vaclav Sverkos was the subject of the highest-profile transfer of the summer to date when joining Borussia Monchengladbach from Banik Ostrava for around £2.3million in early July.

However, at press times the close season's most eagerly anticipated move – that of highly-rated Sparta Prague defender Zdenek Grygera – had yet to transpire.



CSKA snub...Zdenek Grygera

The 23-year-old has already turned down a lucrative offer from CSKA Moscow, rumoured to be worth around £625,000 a year, while interested Western heavyweights such as Juventus, Borussia Dortmund and Ajax had yet to entice him.

Sparta and CSKA had already reached agreement on a deal but Grygera had other ideas, saying he didn't want to be pressured into signing a long-term contract with a club based in a place where he didn't want to live.

Elsewhere, transfer activity has been intense. Sverkos' replacement at Banik will be Marek Heinz, who returns to the Czech Republic after a three-year spell in the Bundesliga. Sparta have been particularly busy, notably bringing in striker Igor Gluscevic from Dutch club Utrecht. The 29-year-old Montenegrin will receive £500,000 a year, making him easily the highest-paid player in the Czech League.

Sparta have also signed a glut of defenders and defensive midfielders. In the summer's biggest deal between two Czech clubs, Sparta acquired sometime international defender Petr Johana in a swap that sees forward Michal Pospisil move to Slovan Liberec. Other defensive acquisitions include Serb Mirko Poledica, from Poland's Lech Poznan, and Tomas Rosicky's older brother Jiri, who was out of contract at Austria's Bregenz.

Veteran Jiri Nemec has returned to Sparta after 10 years away in Germany and, more recently, at Chmel Blsany.

Slavia Prague enter the new season with a more settled squad than their city rivals but they have brought in Hungarian forward Tibor Tokody from Ujpest. He replaces Stepan Vachousek, who has completed a long-expected move to Marseille. Out-of-favour Banik Ostrava midfielder Martin Lukes and young Plzen forward Pavel Fort are Slavia's other major signings.

Sam Beckwith

RUSSIA

New coach to spark Spartak

HOPES of a revival at former champions Moscow Spartak have been raised by the appointment as coach of Andrei Chernyshev, a former Spartak and national team defender.

The new man has won acclaim for his work with Russia's Olympic side, who have lost only once since he took charge and are set fair to gain a place at next year's Games. Chernyshev, who will combine the two coaching roles, now must lift Russia's most popular club from their unaccustomed position in the lower half of the table. Although the championship itself looks out of the question, Spartak's stated aim is to finish in the top three.

Chernyshev replaces long-time coach Oleg Romantsev, who was fired for publicly criticising the policies of club president Andrei Chervichenko. The latter has promised the new coach £6million for player purchases, with Croatia defender Danijel Hrman (Varteks), Serb midfielder Srdzan Stanic (OFK Belgrade) and Hungarian keeper Szabolcs Safar (Salzburg) already signed.

Chernyshev's assistant is another former international, Sergei Yuran, who played for Kyiv Dynamo, Benfica, FC Porto and Millwall.

Spartak's city rivals CSKA are well on their way to winning the championship having established a nine-point lead just after the halfway stage. The Army men have already defeated title-holders Lokomotiv twice to prove their championship potential.

Victor Gusev

SLOVAKIA

Radolsky removed in purge of coaches

HALF of the 10 sides in last season's top division have had a change of coach, most notably Bratislava heavyweights Slovan. They parted company with Dusan Radolsky, now at Polish side Groclin Grodzisk, after the club slumped from being runaway League leaders at the winter break to a third-place finish.

Radolsky's replacement is Jozef Valovic, who has joined on a one-year deal. The 51-year-old left Slovan eight years ago after spending

19 years as youth coach and then assistant head coach.

Champions MSK Zilina have lost top scorer, playmaker and captain Marek Mintal to German Second Division Nurnberg for a reported £250,000. Despite Mintal's departure, Zilina have already won silverware in the new season, beating Puchov 2-0 in the Super Cup.

Ed Holt

POLAND

Chairman: "My players threw matches"

THE FA is investigating claims by the chairman of Second Division runners-up Swit Nowy Dwor that his players "sold" their promotion-relegation play-off games against First Division Garbarnia Szczakowianka. Wojciech Szymanski made his allegations after Swit lost the tie 3-1 on aggregate.

The chairman claimed senior team members had intimidated the younger ones by threatening to burn their cars if they did not comply. At the same time they were offered £30,000 for their acquiescence.

To back his claims, Szymanski presented the testimonies of two younger, unnamed players, which included the accusations he had reiterated. Szymanski also agreed to undergo a lie detector test, arranged by Poland's biggest newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, which he passed,

Swit player Grzegorz Milkowski, alleged to be among the ringleaders, said: "I am innocent. And I wait for the chairman's real evidence. If not, I will take him to court."

Garbarnia chairman Tadeusz Fudala denied his club's involvement and also threatened to sue Szymanski after a potential new sponsor pulled out of a £235,000 contract in the wake of the affair.

The FA's disciplinary commission has temporarily suspended seven Swit players, having passed on the matter to the police prosecutor.

Dariusz Kurowski

Round-up

Rapid sign African duo

ROMANIA'S Rapid Bucharest have signed two Africans – Ghanaian keeper Ibrahim Dossey (Brasov) and Cameroon striker Jeremy Njock (UTA) – with their Champions League campaign in view.

Cup holders Dinamo Bucharest have bought Serbo-Montenegrin Under-21 midfielder Zoran Beosevic from FK Timok, after selling captain Giani Kirita to Samsunspor of Turkey. Steaua Bucharest signed forward Laurentiu Dinita from Sportul Studentesc and central defender Tiberiu Curt from neighbours National.

Brasov coach Marius Lacatus has signed veteran keeper Florin Prunea, his old Romania team-mate.

Cristian Popovici has taken over at Bacau after a spell at Aerostar Bacau, and Gavril Pele Balint,

Back home...Pisont

who won the Moldovan League with Serif Tiraspol last term, has replaced Samsunspor-bound Gheorghe Multescu at Poli AEK.

Michael Bowesfield

In **BULGARIA**, former CSKA Sofia striker Asen Bukarev has joined Levski, after a season at Cherno More. The latter have sold another striker, Daniel Bogdanovic, to Maltese champions Sliema Wanderers.

Michael Bowesfield

LITHUANIA champions FBK Kaunas sacked coach Saulius Shirmialis after the club fell seven points behind leaders Ekranas. His replacement is former Soviet Union star Sergei Borovskiy.

Vladimir Kalinkovich

Balaton FC, formerly Siofok, face **HUNGARIAN** League runners-up Ferencvaros at home in a tough first game of the season for new young coach Aurel Csertoi. Another newcomer, Attila Pinter, leads Sopron against champions MTK.

The latter have signed a trio of Under-21 internationals – striker Sandor Torghelle and defender Peter Pandur from relegated Kispest, and Oliver Pusztai from Balaton – plus seasoned campaigners Istvan Pisont and Gabor Halmai from Israeli clubs.

Peterjon Cresswell

Pro-file Razvan Rat

Romanian youngster bought to do the business in Donetsk

AFTER stealing a march on many European clubs to recruit Hajduk Split and Croatia keeper Stipe Pletikosa, Shakhtar Donetsk once again demonstrated their new-found pulling power with the signing of highly-rated young midfielder or defender Razvan Rat from Romanian champions Rapid Bucharest.

This was not a Rat race Shakhtar had been expected to win. Ajax had long been admirers, Shakhtar's main domestic rivals and traditional top dogs Kyiv Dynamo were reported to be tabling a bid, while late last season Internazionale appeared willing to pay Rat's modest £1.9 million price-tag. However, the ever-persuasive Shakhtar president, Rinat Akhmetov, had other ideas. As prospective buyers hesitated or haggled, Akhmetov moved in to cut a deal to bring Rat to Donetsk on a one-year loan deal, with the option of a permanent transfer.

Some in Romania have expressed bewilderment at Rat's move, pointing out he was merely swapping one Champions League pre-qualifying team for another, and that a player considered the best young prospect in the country could only better himself in Western Europe. But Rat insists he has not made a sideways move.

"I was impressed by the Shakhtar president's ambitious plans," says the 22-year-old. "He wants the team to take over from Kyiv Dynamo as the best in Ukraine and to be respected in the Champions League. These are two big challenges, but I'm sure they can be achieved. The talent is here; this team is being strengthened all the time."

A regular for Romania for the past 18 months, Rat's ability to slot in effortlessly at full-back, wing-back or in central midfield, his easy technique, pace and work ethic make him a valuable acquisition. "Razvan is an outstanding talent," says Besiktas boss Mircea Lucescu, who groomed him during a spell in charge at Rapid in the late 1990s. "He was excellent last season as Rapid won the title again and has settled extremely well in the national team, playing with a great deal of self-assurance and tactical sense. You'd think he'd been there for a decade.

"He is a strong character too. When on loan to Bacau three years ago he was in a struggling side that were relegated. But he never stopped fighting. It was there he grew up as a footballer."

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr)
Country Romania
Born June 26, 1981, in Slatina
Previous clubs Rapid Bucharest, Bacau, Rapid Bucharest
International debut February 2002, v France
International caps 9 (0 goals)
Honours Romanian League 1999, 2003 (Rapid); Romanian Cup 1998, 2002 (Rapid)

Boca's high five

Tim Vickery reviews this year's Libertadores Cup

IN 1963, Santos of Brazil beat Argentina's Boca Juniors home and away to win the Libertadores Cup. Forty years later Boca gained revenge and won their fifth title.

Just as the feats of Pele and co are still celebrated, the achievement of this Boca side, champions for the third time in four seasons, should be remembered for years to come.

This was one of the great Libertadores wins. So pedestrian in the group phase, Boca were staring elimination in the face when they lost at home to Brazil's Paysandu in the second round first leg. Then Carlos Tevez was brought into the side.

The stocky 19-year-old emerged last year as a playmaker, groomed to replace Juan Roman Riquelme. Now he was pushed further forward. Coach Carlos Bianchi calculated that with his bursts of acceleration, tight dribbling and breathtaking ability on the turn, Tevez could do most damage close to the opposition's goal.

It was a typically pragmatic Bianchi masterstroke, illustrating why he has become the first coach to win the Libertadores four times. Thus re-enforced, Boca galloped to the title with seven straight wins, scoring 19 goals and conceding just five.

There can be no complaints about the standard of the opposition. In the quarter-finals they faced the rugged Cobreloa, soon to be crowned Chilean champions. In the semis they cruised past Colombia's America, who were on a high after eliminating Boca's arch-rivals, River Plate. Then came Santos, champions of Brazil, who swaggered into the Final proudly protecting an unbeaten record.

The aggregate score of 5-1 makes it appear Boca were hardly extended. Nothing could be further from the truth. Over two enthralling ties Santos had the vast majority of possession, and the destiny of the title was still in doubt inside the last 10 minutes. Santos have many merits, and coach Emerson Leao's positive approach made them a credit to the competition. But Boca's undeniable superiority lay in the fact that they had a better balance between attack and defence.

Santos had obvious weaknesses. Keeper Fabio Costa is prone to lapses of judgment, the centre-back pairing of two stoppers, cumbersome and too similar in style, is left exposed by a midfield that presses in the opposition half. But that was as true in February as it was in July.

Damage limitation...Santos defender Alex attempts to halt the progress of Carlos Tevez, a major influence in Boca's success

Santos fail up front

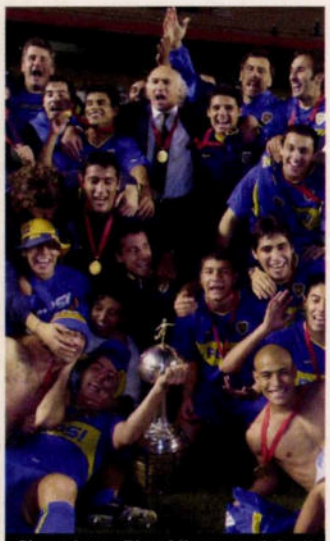
Earlier in the competition the risks were worth taking because the team had such attacking potency. From the Santos point of view, their defeat lay in the failure of their front men when it mattered most. After scoring nine goals, Ricardo Oliveira spent a month out with a knee injury. He was rushed back to action because Santos had no adequate replacement but could not regain his early sharpness.

Winger Robinho collapsed under the burden of expectation. He made his name cutting in from the left on to his stronger right foot. Once this route was blocked he lost confidence and cut a sorry figure in the Final.

But there were no such disappointments from fellow wonderkid Diego. The 18-year-old playmaker took on responsibility for organising the attack with astonishing maturity and strength of personality. Unfortunately for Santos, he searched in vain for partners.

Even so, the outcome could well have been different if Marcelo Delgado's harmless free-kick had not been allowed to drift in and give Boca a vital second goal at the end of the first leg. Or if Boca's Javier Villarreal had not cleared an Alex header off the line early in the second leg.

The tactical battle, though, was well won by Boca. Approaching both legs like the away side, they fielded two compact lines of four to smother the Santos attack. They pushed their strikers wide and played them in


Champions...Bianchi's men celebrate

down the channels with a single penetrative pass.

There were plenty of other heroes besides Tevez in the Boca ranks. Nicolas Burdisso is from the discreet school of centre-backs, a defender so gifted that he can pass unnoticed. The return from injury of Sebastian Battaglia brought all-round skills and solid footballing sense to midfield. And with his pace and power striker Delgado was a key weapon. His three goals in the Final meant that he finished the competition alongside Ricardo Oliveira as top scorer.

Delgado and Battaglia are among a handful of players involved in all three of Boca's recent Libertadores title wins. But the former has already moved to Mexico, joining Cruz Azul, while the latter is attracting interest from Europe. South American football continues to produce raw materials for foreign markets and the likes of Boca and Santos will sooner or later have to part with their young stars.

Gate receipts for the second leg of the Final, in Sao Paulo's giant Morumbi stadium, were less than half those Manchester United can count on for every home game. There is no way that South America can compete in economic terms.

Given this scenario, the Libertadores is in robust health. The structure is sound, there are plenty of eye-catching youngsters, and with an average of three goals a game, the football is attractive – 180 minutes of Boca v Santos was incalculably better than 120 minutes of Milan v Juventus, this year's European equivalent.

Talent Scout

10 eye-catching players from Libertadores 2003

BRAZIL

IARLEY (29.03.74) – **Paysandu**
Diminutive attacking midfielder once with Real Madrid B, but began the year having never played in the Brazilian First Division. At his best running with the ball from wide. Was so outstanding against Boca they have now signed him.

LIEDSON (07.12.77) – **Corinthians**
Just over a year ago was a little-known striker with Coritiba – a brief spell with Flamengo and now six Libertadores goals have given him a much higher profile. He excels in the tight spaces of the penalty area.

CHILE

Boris GONZALEZ (22.05.80) – **Cobreloa**
Powerful right-back or wing-back with the skill and lung power to supply attacking options. Stalwart of the Cobreloa side that reached the quarter-finals and won the Chilean title, he has also made his international breakthrough.

Mexico move...Molina

COLOMBIA

Mauricio MOLINA (30.04.80) – **Independiente Medellin**
Left-footed attacking midfielder whose potential had long been apparent. Really came of age in the Libertadores, though, showing physical and mental strength and scoring glorious goals from outside the area. Has now moved to Morelia of Mexico.

Luis Amaranto PEREA (30.01.79) – **Independiente Medellin**
Signed recently by Boca after outstanding displays on the left of Medellin's three-man defence. Impressed with his pace, strength and timing in the tackle. Occasional problems cutting on to his stronger right foot to play out from the back.

Kilian VIRVIESCAS (02.08.80) – **America**
Once a midfielder, now converted into an attacking left-back of pace, power and trickery. Came to the fore during the course of the competition, and his storming quarter-final displays against River Plate earned him an international call-up and a move to the Buenos Aires club.

ECUADOR

David QUIROZ (08.09.82) – **El Nacional**
Midfield anchorman who contributed to his team's excellent defensive record in a difficult group with tight marking, tough tackling and sound, strong passing. Has deservedly since won a call-up to the national squad.

PARAGUAY

Fredy BAREIRO (27.03.82) – **12 de Octubre**
Well-built, pacy striker who loves celebrating his goals by pulling out a 'Zorro' mask. Only managed it twice in the Libertadores but provided plenty of headaches for opposing defenders. Looks to have a bright international future.

Rapier finisher...Fredy Bareiro's 'Zorro' goal celebrations are set for a wider airing

PERU

Miguel VILLALTA (16.06.81) – **Sporting Cristal**
Stopper who played a key part in a young defence that came through the competition with great credit. Subsequently suffered a worrying head injury but appears to have recovered to regain his place in the national squad.

URUGUAY

German HORNOS (21.08.82) – **Fenix**
Stocky striker, well balanced with good touch and awareness who can both score and set up for others. Already a full international, he is now Europe-bound after his Libertadores success attracted the interest of Sevilla.

River outrun Boca reserves

Eric Weil reviews the closing championship campaign

Rolling River...Manuel Pellegrini's squad celebrate their closing championship success

ARGENTINA

RIVER PLATE won the closing championship, their 30th professional title, by four points after traditional rivals Boca Juniors threw away their chance of glory.

After managing only a 2-2 draw at home to River on June 1, Boca fielded reserve teams in their last five League games as they kept their top players fresh for the latter stages of their ultimately triumphant Libertadores Cup campaign. The reserves did well, in fact, winning two of their matches, but they could not keep pace with River.

The new champions, under Chilean coach Manuel Pellegrini, undoubtedly played the best football, and in Andres D'Alessandro had the League's best player. However, he has just signed for Bundesliga side Wolfsburg, defender Martin Demichelis is also on his way to Germany, with Bayern Munich, veteran club captain Leonardo Astrada is retiring after winning a record 12 titles with River, and more players are likely to leave.

Boca's continental success also put a dampener on River's celebrations. D'Alessandro said: "Winning the *clausura* is little consolation for not winning the Libertadores Cup." River lost to America of Colombia in the quarter-finals and could only watch as Boca marched on to victory over Santos of Brazil in the Final.

The Big Two both had undignified final matches in the domestic League. River, who had sealed the title the week before, lost 3-1 at home to Racing Club. Boca, meanwhile, were thrashed 7-2 away to Rosario Central having even been without their best reserves. They had been allowed to stay in Buenos Aires for a Libertadores Cup celebration.

Luciano Figueroa scored five of Rosario's goals, becoming the first player to achieve the feat against Boca and in the process taking top spot in the national scoring chart. Figueroa finished with 17 goals, two more than Velez Sarsfield's Roberto Nanni, who had been leading the way for most of the season.

Of more significance was the fact that Rosario's victory allowed them to finish just above Talleres Cordoba and Nueva Chicago, who were forced into relegation play-offs. Both survived after beating promotion candidates, but that should not distract from the fact that the rules about fielding under-strength teams in League games are very lax in Argentina. There have frequently been such unfair results affecting title and relegation positions, and the situation needs to be addressed.

Boca Juniors qualify for next year's Libertadores Cup as holders, Independiente and River Plate as opening and closing championship winners, and Velez Sarsfield and Rosario Central by virtue of their high ranking in the combined League table for the 2002-03 season. Union Santa Fe and Huracan were automatically relegated.

Defender Guillermo Sanguinetti of Gimnasia y Esgrima has retired after 400 matches for the club. At the other end of the spectrum, midfielder Sergio Aguero became the youngest player to appear in the top flight when making his debut for Independiente on the last day aged 15 years, 33 days. The previous record-holder was Diego Maradona, who made his Argentinos Juniors debut 10 days short of his 16th birthday.

BRAZIL

'Teflon' Teixeira re-elected

TWO years after a Congressional investigation accused Brazilian Football Confederation president Ricardo Teixeira of tax evasion, dodging foreign exchange controls and illegally pocketing the CBF's cash he was re-elected president and began a fifth term in office.

Teixeira, standing for the 'Five-times world champions' party, beat Carlos Alberto Oliveira by 46 votes to one. There were three abstentions, while Flamengo president Helio Ferraz turned up too late to vote but still had a celebratory beer with Teixeira afterwards.

The president, helped by Brazil's World Cup win last year and the failure of public prosecutors to act on the Congressional report, has thus emerged stronger than ever. Having said last year that he would not stand for re-election, Teixeira promptly did the opposite and won the new mandate, which will leave him in power until 2008.

"There was great insistence from the presidents of a number of [state] federations and the clubs," he explained. "They put pressure on me, I thought about it and accepted."

Cruzeiro maintained their lead in the national championship, despite a shaky spell after three players were called up for the Confederations Cup. Champions Santos' were next to suffer as four players were taken to the Gold Cup, to which Brazil sent their Under-23 side. Sao Paulo took advantage, leapfrogging Santos into second place.

The toll from the Dance of the Coaches had reached 15 after the first 18 rounds. Most recent victims were Renato Portaluppit, who left Fluminense in tears after being fired, and Vasco da Gama's Antonio Lopes. The latter, in his fifth stint there, was not officially sacked. Instead, he was given "time off" by president Eurico Miranda. "Lopes told me he wasn't feeling well and asked to leave," said Miranda. "I didn't agree, so I decided to give him some time off. As long as I'm president, he can return when he wants."

Bizarre, even by the standards of Brazil's eccentric directors.

Brian Homewood

Back again...Boca's Marcelo Delgado has rejoined Cruz Azul

On the up

MEXICO

A NUMBER of promising developments over recent months suggest Mexican football is entering a new and better era.

For one thing, the high cost of players' wages is coming down to a reasonable level – thanks to the controversial move made by Cruz Azul in April to rescind the contracts of all their players following a run of 10 matches without a win.

The club made severance payments, then invited players to re-sign after agreeing to a new contract under which bonus payments were closely related to performance. The policy worked, Cruz Azul improved on the field, reaching the play-offs, and several other clubs have introduced schemes along the same lines.

Another sound decision was to end the player draft, meaning that each club will have to shop for players directly with other teams. Simple economics suggest that this should reduce the price of players. Only six of the 20 First Division clubs could be termed rich. Usually poor clubs have bad teams and lose hope. With that comes a desire to cut costs, achieved by dumping of players. Naturally, as the supply of players rises their prices will fall.

On the transfer front, the trend in signing South American players who cannot find a European team to buy them has continued. Cruz Azul have snapped up Argentinian Marcelo Delgado, who shone for Boca Juniors in their Libertadores Cup triumph. It is the 30-year-old's second spell with the 'Cementeros', having previously played there as a teenager. This time he will be alongside another Delgado, Cesar, also signed from Argentina, in his case Rosario Central.

Toluca, have signed Paraguayan central defender Paulo Da Silva from Libertad, Colombian Harold Lozano moves from Mallorca to Pachuca, and his compatriot Mauricio Molina, a gifted attacking midfielder, signed with Morelia from Independiente Medellin.

On the coaching front, former Argentina keeper Nery Pumpido has replaced Ricard Ferreti at Tigres UNL.

Carlos Ramirez

South American round-up

Desert Foxes storm to title

COBRELOA, from the desert mining town of Calama, won the **CHILEAN** opening championship after beating Colo Colo in the two-leg Final. After a goalless draw in Santiago, Cobreloa beat their capital city opponents 4-0 back home to claim their sixth title. Colo Colo finished the second leg with only eight men after three players, including former international forward Ivan Zamorano, were sent off.

Cobreloa, known as the Desert Foxes, are undoubtedly the best team in Chile at the moment, and proved their continental pedigree by reaching the last eight of the Libertadores Cup. Defence is a particular strength, with experienced keeper Nelson Tapia a key figure.

Much of the credit for Cobreloa's rise should go to Uruguayan coach Nelson Acosta, who reorganised the team before leaving near the end of the campaign to take over the Bolivian national team.

Universidad de Chile players refused to go on tour after the end of the opening campaign because they are owed three months' salary. The club's financial plight meant they were also unable to afford an extension to the loan contract of former Colombia striker Faustino Asprilla, who had scored some vital goals for them.

URUGUAY: Nacional, the opening championship winners, lost their unbeaten record on the final day of the 17-match campaign, beaten 3-2 by Danubio.

PARAGUAY: Opening champions Libertad and Guarani both won their first three games of the closing campaign to go joint top. Olimpia, last year's Libertadores Cup winners, to whom Luis Cubilla has returned as coach, were a point behind.

BOLIVIA: Financially-troubled Union Central are being forced to field junior players in their away matches because the club's professionals refuse to travel by bus and the club cannot afford air fares. Union are based in Tarija, in the far south, and away matches often involve a 2,000km round trip, mostly on poor roads.

The wholesale changes have led to some wildly fluctuating results – Union lost 12-0 away to Jorge Wilstermann four days after beating Independiente Petrolero 8-0 at home.

Real Potosi players appeared to help a fan evade the police after he had run on to the pitch to hit the referee towards the end of their 5-3 home defeat by The Strongest.

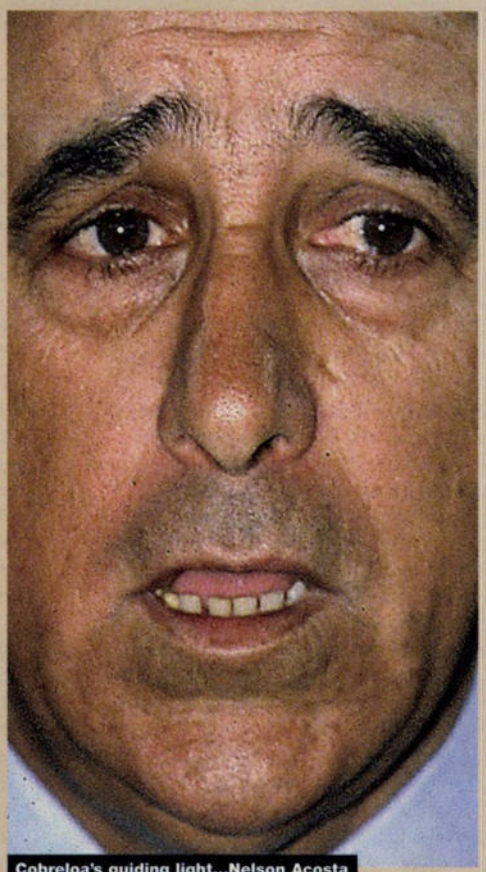
PERU: Last year's overall champions, Sporting Cristal, won this season's opening tournament by three points from Alianza Lima.

ECUADOR: Barcelona won the opening championship by two points from LDU Quito and take three bonus points into the overall championship play-offs. LDU and third-placed El Nacional gain two and one bonus points respectively.

El Nacional's 'no foreigners' policy does not extend to their coaches. The army club won their first three matches under Serb Dragan Miranovic.

Emelec, meanwhile, have hired Argentinian coach Julio Asad and prolific striker Carlos Juarez from Uruguay's Nacional.

Eric Weil


Cobreloa's guiding light...Nelson Acosta

Rwanda lead march of new boys

Mark Gleeson on some fresh faces in the African Nations Cup finals

Toughing it out...South Africa qualified after a hard fight against Ivory Coast

AFRICAN NATIONS CUP

THE finalists for the African Nations Cup in Tunisia in January are now confirmed, with three countries – Benin, Rwanda and Zimbabwe – set to make their first appearance.

The fact there is so much new blood highlighted the increasingly competitive nature of the qualifiers. But the last three rounds, played in June and July, were marred by brutal violence, which has led to several players being handed lengthy bans.

Rwanda, the tiny East African country, pulled off the biggest shock in Nations Cup history by beating Ghana 1-0 at home in the final game in Group 13 to qualify ahead of the four-times champions. Jimmy Gatete scored the historic goal in Kigali against a Ghanaian side hit by the withdrawal of several overseas-based players involved in a money dispute with their FA.

Benin's qualification was also a surprise. They hammered Zambia 3-0 in Cotonou in the last round to finish top of Group 3, despite having changed coach halfway through the campaign.

Zimbabwe, who have had a long list of narrow misses, finally made it as runners-up with most points from all the four-team groups. However, their qualification, behind Mali in Group 6, came only after Gabon beat Sierra Leone 2-0 in Group 7.

World Cup finalists Senegal were the first to qualify to join hosts Tunisia and holders Cameroon when beating Lesotho 3-0 in mid-June to top Group 8. Algeria and Nigeria were next to go through, with the other finalists being Guinea, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Morocco, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt and South Africa, the latter winning a tough tussle with Ivory Coast to top Group 11.

Marring all the drama were attacks on match officials and crowd violence. The Confederation of African Football handed two-year bans to Ethiopian Dawit Mebratu, who tried to strangle the referee in the match against Liberia in June, and Kevin Tamboulas of Central African Republic, who kicked the fourth official after his side lost in Mozambique.

Ethiopia's Mamo Alem Shanko and Anteneh Alamrew were banned for a year after spitting at a referee, while Boubou Ndiaye of Mauritania was handed the same punishment for hitting the referee after being sent off against Cape Verde Islands. The game in Mindelo had to be abandoned with seven minutes remaining after Mauritania had five players sent off, taking them below the minimum seven needed to continue.

There was crowd violence in Senegal and Benin, and complaints from opponents of Togo, accused of cheating when they suddenly conferred nationality on three Brazilian players who had been in the country less than a year. Jefferson Paulo Rodrigues, Alexander Faria (who scored three goals in two matches in the qualifiers) and Koffi de Sousa were all granted citizenship ahead of matches against Cape Verde Islands and Kenya in an abortive bid to win Group 5. They had been brought to the country by Togo's Brazilian coach Antonio Dumas but have since left for trials with French clubs.

Early start on road to Germany

AFRICA kicks off its World Cup 2006 campaign in October with the first round of qualifiers, months ahead of the usual start.

The World Cup qualifiers have been combined with those for the 2006 African Nations Cup finals in Egypt to ease fixture congestion. This has meant a new format, with more group matches but a first round of knockout games to cut down on the competing field. A record African entry of 51 countries will set off on the road to Germany, one more than for the 2002 event in Korea/Japan.

Nine countries have been given byes into the qualifying group stage, due to kick off next April – the five World Cup finalists in 2002 (Cameroon, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia) and the four other highest-placed African nations in the late-June FIFA world rankings (Morocco, Egypt, Ivory Coast and Democratic Republic of Congo).

The other 42 countries have been drawn in 21 two-leg ties, to be played in October and November, with the winners joining the nine other countries in the overall World Cup draw in Frankfurt in December.

The 30 African nations will be divided into five groups of six, with the group winners qualifying for the finals in Germany. The top three in each group qualify for the 2006 Nations Cup finals.

Mark Gleeson

● *See World Service for World Cup preliminary round draw*

ASEC and Esperance head the field

THE African Champions League eight-team group stage features only one – ASEC Abidjan of Ivory Coast – who have won the competition since the new format was brought in seven years ago.

Esperance of Tunisia, twice runners-up, are former champions from the days of the straight knockout system, USM Alger are back for the first time since the inaugural year in 1997, and the five other teams are all new to the format. Of them, Cameroon's Canon Yaounde and Ismaili of Egypt are also ex-African champions but their glory days are long past.

The likes of Nigeria's Enyimba and Angolans AS Aviacao could rise to new glory. Enyimba, from Aba, near Port Harcourt, are on course for their third successive Nigerian title. AS Aviacao have Africa's only artificial pitch installed at their training ground in Luanda and a savvy coach in Portuguese Bernardino Pedroto.

Tanzanians Simba caused the shock of the tournament by beating defending champions Zamalek of Egypt in the second round. But they face a problem over their ground in Dar-es-Salaam, which the African confederation has ruled cannot be used for the Champions League unless the pitch is improved. Simba could be forced to play at Mwanza on Lake Victoria, draining a likely share of £2million income from the competition.

The top two finishers in each group will meet in semi-finals in November.

Mark Gleeson

● *See World Service for match schedule*

Round-up

CENTRAL AFRICA

Idrissa Traore has been fired as coach of the **CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC** after a row with officials. He had been in the job for only four months.

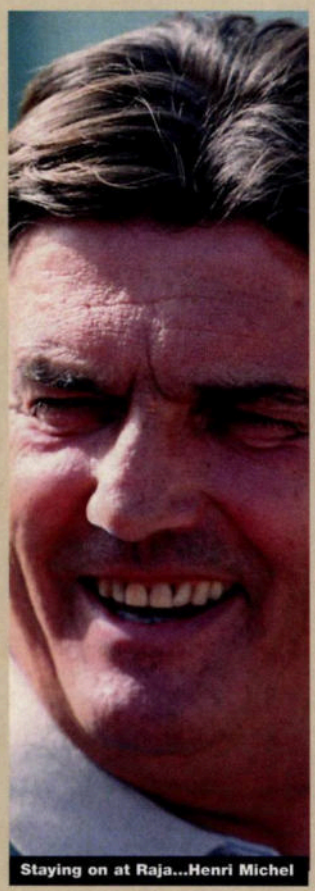
Inter Bom-Bom are champions on **SAO TOME E PRINCIPE**, winning the national Final 4-1 against Primeiro Maio. Olperaruois won the Cup Final by beating UDESCAI 1-0 after extra-time.

EAST AFRICA

AS Port Louis 2000 have won a second successive title in **MAURITIUS**. The League's leading scorer Kersley Appou scored twice in the 4-0 win over Grand-Port United that clinched the title. AS Port Louis were denied the Double, however, when beaten 4-2 on penalties by Savanne SC in the Cup Final after a 1-1 draw.

Swiss coach Hans Heiniger has stepped down as **MADAGASCAR** coach after they lost their last African Nations Cup qualifier at home to Mauritius in July. Rodolphe Rakotoarisoa is the new man in charge.

Akbar Patel has taken over from Patrick Parizon as coach of **MAURITIUS**.



Staying on at Raja...Henri Michel

NORTH AFRICA

EGYPTIAN champions Zamalek have refused to release Nelo Vingada from his contract in order to join Portuguese compatriot Carlos Queiroz at Real Madrid. Vingada had already signed with the Cairo club when Queiroz tapped him for the No 2 job at the Bernabeu. Vingada has since steered Zamalek to the Arab Club Championship, beating Kuwait SC 2-1 in the Final.

Former Benfica coach Toni has taken over at Zamalek's great rivals Al Ahly, who have sold Hossam Ghali to Feyenoord. German Theo Bucker is the new coach at Ismaili.

ALGERIA coach Georges Leekens has resigned after just six months to take the helm at Excelsior Mouscron in his native Belgium. Frenchman Herve Revelli is the new coach of Mouloudia Oran, while compatriot Francois Bracci takes over at CS Constantine.

In **TUNISIA**, Turkey-born coach Muhsin Ertugral has joined Club Africain. Henri Michel has signed a one-year extension to his contract at Raja Casablanca.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Civics inflicted Tigers' second consecutive defeat in the **NAMIBIAN** FA Cup Final when winning 4-2.

Kabwe Warriors won the Top 8 Cup in **ZAMBIA** after beating Konkola Blades 2-0 in the Final. Musonda Mwueke scored both goals.

The Cup Final in **MALAWI** between Bakili Bullets and Wanderers was abandoned during extra-time after a crowd riot following a disallowed Wanderers goal.

Portuguese coach Jose Alberto Torres has taken the reins at Progresso Sambizanga in **ANGOLA**.

WEST AFRICA

Jeanne d'Arc, coached by former French international Alain Moizan, retained the title in **SENEGAL**, edging out Diaraf Dakar on the final day. AS Douanes beat ASC Thies 1-0 in Dakar to lift the Cup.

Mark Gleeson

Pro-file Didier Drogba

Ivorian striker on his bike to Marseille's Velodrome

ONE of the disappointments of the African Nations Cup qualifiers was the strong-looking Ivory Coast's failure to reach the finals in Tunisia early next year.

It means the rest of the continent, and an even wider audience, will not be exposed to the talents of Didier Drogba.

But in France, where he has spent his entire career, the tall striker was one of the big summer headline-makers, his destination for the new season the subject of much speculation before Marseille paid £3.5million for his signature.

A goal every other game for Guingamp made him one of the revelations of the 2002-03 season – his final tally of 17 putting him third in the national scoring standings.

Now he joins France's most furiously supported side, following in the wake of compatriot Ibrahima Bakayoko, whose mantle he has also taken in the Ivorian national side.

Marseille were his choice ahead of champions Lyon, who had also courted him. "They were always in my head, but I was hesitating all the time," Drogba recalls. "Then one day I said to myself: 'Didier, you have five minutes to decide.' I chose Marseille, called my agent and a big burden was lifted. The money wasn't important. If it was I could have gone to Lyon or England. But Marseille have a glorious tradition and they are coming back anew."

Drogba says he was a big fan of the all-conquering Marseille team that featured Jean-Pierre Papin, Abedi Pele, Alen Boksic and Rudi Voller, and is proud to be following in their footsteps.

Born in the Ivorian capital Abidjan, Drogba came to France as a five-year-old. His uncle, Michel Goba, was a journeyman in the French Second Division and Drogba lived with him because his father wanted him to be educated in France. Football runs in the family. A cousin is Olivier Tebily, formerly of Celtic and now at Birmingham.

Drogba played at Levallois as a junior and in the Second Division with Le Mans for almost four seasons before Guy Lacombe brought him to Guingamp in early 2002.

A goal on his debut against Metz set him on his way, and he gained a regular place for the 2002-03 season, during which he scored against Marseille at their Velodrome stadium. Many more are expected from him there now it is his home ground.

Mark Gleeson

Fact file

Club Marseille (Fra)
Country Ivory Coast
Born March 11, 1978, in Abidjan
Previous clubs Le Mans (Fra), Guingamp (Fra)
International debut September 2002, v South Africa
International caps 6 (4 goals)

Ivica leads JEF to the top

Mike Plastow & Yumiko Nagae on a surprise championship challenge

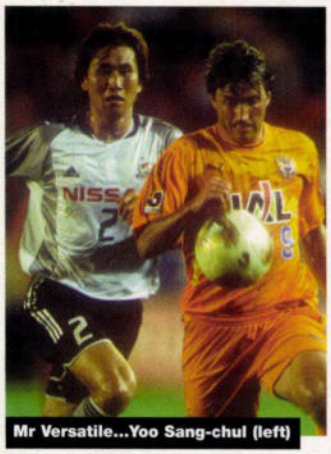
JAPAN

IVICA OSIM has worked a modest miracle at JEF United Ichihara, keeping the medium-budget club on top of the J.League's First Stage table with three games to play, ahead of big-spending Jubilo, Yokohama F Marinos, Grampus Eight and Kashima Antlers.

Bosnia-born Osim, who now has Austrian nationality, is never one to talk his team up, however. Asked why they are doing so well, he says: "Because nobody takes us seriously."

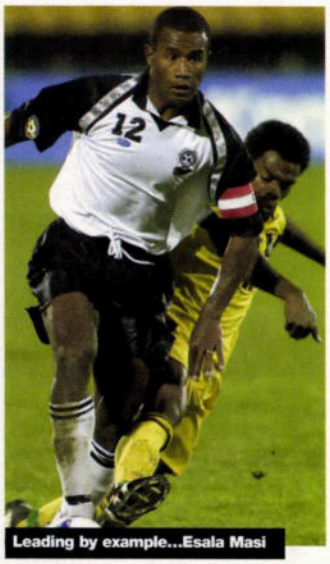
Marinos had been expecting to end the stage able to field a Brazilian wing-back combination of Dutra and Cafu. After Cafu reneged on his promise to join, however, Marinos brought back South Korea utility man Yoo Sang-chul from Chonbuk Hyundai.

Having played as striker, midfielder and central defender in his previous J.League incarnations at Marinos and Kashiwa Reysol, Yoo is now on the right side of defence. But that didn't stop him from scoring his 39th J.League goal in 79 games against Kyoto Purple Sanga.


Mr Versatile...Yoo Sang-chul (left)

Sanga, who have struggled since selling South Korean Park Ji-sung to PSV Eindhoven, have signed compatriots Ko Jong-su, a striker, and defender Lim You-hwan from Hanyang University. They have also replaced German coach Gert Engels with Pim Verbeek, formerly No 2 to Guus Hiddink with South Korea.

Urawa Reds have signed Russian World Cup defender Yuri Nikiforov from RKC Waalwijk, and Japan World Cup striker Atsushi Yanagisawa has joined Sampdoria from Kashima Antlers on a one-year loan.


Leading by example...Esala Masi

OCEANIA

Masi makes the difference

AN inspirational performance by skipper Esala Masi enabled hosts Fiji to beat surprise package New Caledonia 2-0 in the South Pacific Games Final in Suva.

Masi, who plays for Australian side Newcastle United, created the opening goal for his cousin, Manoa Masi, with an exquisite cross in the 20th minute and capped that midway through the second half with a stunning 30-yard free-kick.

Only the French territory's tenacious defence, in which captain Jean-Marc Case excelled, prevented Fiji from going further ahead.

NEW ZEALAND: The three surviving national League teams were kept apart in the Chatham Cup quarter-finals draw, though they all face away ties. Humble Capital Premier League club Island Bay United entertain favourites Central United, CPL leaders Lower Hutt City are at home to Manawatu, and the Northern Regional League's Melville United will host North Shore United. Non-league Christchurch Rangers and University Mount Wellington meet in the other tie.

AUSTRALIA: Former Rangers defender Stuart Munro has been appointed coach of South Melbourne. The former Eastern Pride and Carlton Blues boss takes over in the wake of the Lakesiders' disappointing season, when they finished only seventh.

Paul Moon

Asian Cup rescheduled

THE Asian Football Confederation plans a major overhaul of the continent's key tournaments as part of president Mohamed Bin Hammam's Vision Asia initiative.

The programme, attempting to harness the positive momentum in the region following the hosting of the World Cup, envisages new schedules for the Asian Cup and Champions League, while two new club competitions, the AFC Cup and AFC President's Cup, will be launched.

The Champions League will now be played within a calendar year – from March to November, beginning in 2004 – while the Asian Cup will be rescheduled to avoid clashes with other continental competitions. The next edition after the 2004 finals in China will be played in 2007, and thereafter at four-year intervals. In the past scheduling clashes with events such as the Olympics have caused a number of Asia's top sides to send weakened teams to the Asian Cup, thereby damaging its credibility.

Meanwhile, the AFC and the African confederation (CAF) have patched up their differences following the acrimony stemming from the voting for the 2006 World Cup hosting rights. Asian members of FIFA's executive committee voted in favour of handing Germany the tournament, breaking an agreement between the two continents to support one another. As a result, CAF broke off relations, but harmony was restored at a meeting in Beirut in July.

Michael Church

Asian round-up

Troussier takes Qatar job

FORMER Japan coach Philippe Troussier has taken over the reins in QATAR. The Frenchman, who guided the Japanese to their best World Cup finish last year, has been given a contract through to the 2006 Asian Games.

Radojko Avramovic has been appointed head coach of SINGAPORE. He previously led Kuwait's Olympic and national teams.

Nawaf Al-Temyat, Asia's Player of the Year in 2000, has decided to stay at SAUDI ARABIAN side Al Hilal, spurning an offer to move to Jeddah club Al Ittihad.

Milorad Kosanovic, coach of CHINESE side Dalian Shide, has been handed a five-match touchline ban and fined £2,500 by the Asian Football Confederation after an outburst during his club's defeat by UAE team Al Ain in the first leg of their Asian Champions League semi-final.

IRANIAN international Ali Daei has been released by Al Shabab of Dubai. The former Bayern Munich striker's replacement is Brazilian Carlos Da Silva.

Riffa retained BAHRAIN'S Crown Prince Cup, beating Muharraq 3-1 in the Final.

Valencia of the MALDIVES have fired Brazilian coach George Ferreira, replacing him with assistant Ahmed Mujutaba. Also heading for the exit was Englishman John Layton, who parted company with Hurriya.

In SOUTH KOREA, veteran Ulsan Hyundai striker Kim Hyun-seog has announced he will retire on August 15 after his final outing at the 2003 All-Star Game in Seoul. Kim is the K-League's all-time top scorer, with 110 goals in 361 matches.

OMAN goalkeeper Ali Al-Habsi has signed for Norwegian side Lyn, while former Poland international Janus Wojcik has been named as the new coach of SYRIA.

Michael Church & Azam Mahmood

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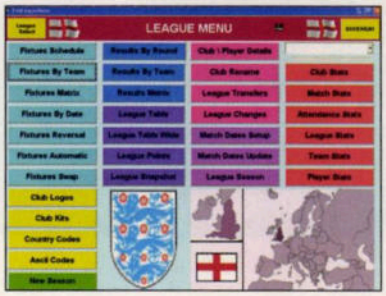

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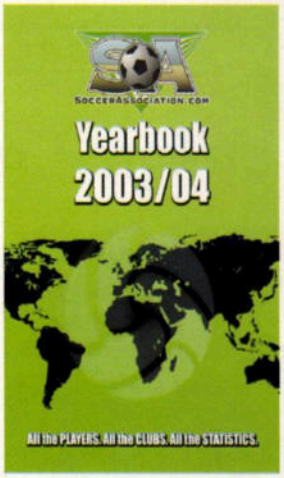

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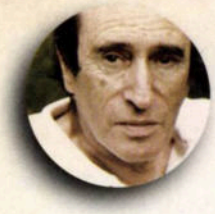


Brian Glanville's LAST WORD

Price to pay for Roman's conquest

'As the spending spree at Chelsea persists, what happens in Moscow may have ominous consequences'

"CHELSEA will stagger humanity!" cried an ecstatic journalist on the occasion of the club's foundation in 1905. And so it has proved, right down to their acquisition by Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich. He arrived, if not quite on a white horse, then just in time to save the club from financial disintegration and to leave their ever-contentious chairman Ken Bates with £17 million in his pocket rather than a monumental debt of over £90m.

That Bates has had stupendous luck is hardly deniable. Napoleon, who always asked "Is he lucky?" before promoting one of his generals to the rank of marshal, would surely have cherished him.

Bates, as we know, bought the club for just £1 but he didn't buy the ground. Could he have done so? Simon Inglis in his book on the football grounds of Britain says it was offered to him for £450,000. Brian Mears, Bates' predecessor as Chelsea chairman, told me it was for £650,000. At all events, Bates didn't buy it and it fell into the clammy hands of a number of development companies who wanted to build flats on the sacred turf of Stamford Bridge, once a massive coal heap before the Mears family converted it into a sports stadium.

But Bates' luck held then, too. Just when all seemed lost, the property market providentially collapsed and he was able to bring back the Bridge under Chelsea's control.

Now Abramovich has saved the club from its seeming profligacy. It is well known that one of the most bitter bones of contention between Bates and the late Matthew Harding – the City millionaire who poured huge sums into Chelsea and still has a stand named after him – was the building of Chelsea Village behind what had traditionally been The Shed; home and haven of the most impassioned fans. Bates wanted it, with its hotel and restaurant complex. Harding wanted Chelsea to remain a football club. Harding died in a helicopter crash, Bates built Chelsea Village, debt mounted rapidly.

But now it doesn't matter. Or it shouldn't. For Abramovich, one of the subtle survivors among the entrepreneurs who bought Russian utilities on the relative cheap after the collapse of the Soviet Union, can take such problems in his stride.

By a large irony, he bought the club and announced he would educate his five children in London at the very time when Boris Berezovski, his former mentor, business partner and fellow billionaire, was involved in a fight against extradition to Russia.

Indeed, in the very week of Abramovich's capture of Chelsea, two other Russian billionaires were in peril in Moscow, one arrested on fraud charges, the other, reportedly the richest man in Russia, detained by the authorities then released. Their crime, and that of Berezovski, was evidently to have supported the political opposition to the sinister ruler of Russia, ex-KGB man Vladimir Putin.

Abramovich has kept his nose clean in that respect, doesn't even speak to Berezovski any more, but still has to surround himself with bodyguards for fear of assassination, a fate that has overtaken all too many rich Russian entrepreneurs.

On the face of it, Abramovich could be the last survivor of the plutocrats who profited from a system of so-called loans for shares, which resulted in the acquisition of succulent bargains. But why cast stones at him when just down the road we find Fulham and the remarkable Mohamed Fayed, who still cannot get the British government to give him a passport? Not to mention that ineffable greedy crook Robert Maxwell, who at various times owned Oxford, Derby and came close to acquiring Tottenham.

With all his money flying around, you do wonder how safe Abramovich feels. Not just from the threat of assassination but from machinations within Russia itself. Sibneft, his company, is being investigated over a £200m tax claim. A group of so-called "oligarchs" – the mega-rich men who picked up state companies on the cheap – have reportedly pleaded recently with Putin to call off his KGB pals. Arrests have been made, investigations of just how these utilities were acquired are in prospect. So as the spending spree at Stamford Bridge persists – Glen Johnson from West Ham for £6m, Geremi from Real Madrid (via Middlesbrough) for £6.9m, Damien Duff from Blackburn for £17m, Thierry Henry, Alessandro Nesta, Andrii Shevchenko, Edgar Davids, Juan Veron all supposedly targeted – what happens in Moscow may have ominous consequences.

Hardly had Abramovich taken control of Chelsea than he was having a quiet tea with England coach Sven Goran 'Of-course-I'm-not-interested-in-Chelsea' Eriksson and agent.

It has been rumoured that the FA would be all too happy to be rid of the Swede and his huge £2m-a-year salary for which of late, alas, he has been doing very little.

Incumbent Chelsea manager Claudio Ranieri plainly trembled at the Russian's arrival and the news of all that tea and sympathy between Abramovich and Eriksson, only to be reassured his job was safe. Well, at least for the moment. In any case he has most of his five-year contract to console him with lucrative pay-out prospects.

It is interesting that Abramovich has also reportedly contacted Vicente Del Bosque, the brusquely-deposed manager of Real Madrid.

Lucky men?...Abramovich has proved to be a survivor while Bates, inset, has pocketed £17m

Snubbed...Chelsea could have avoided Zola's departure

This had been coming for a long time, whatever Del Bosque won, since he was far too modest, unassuming and unfashionable a fellow for domineering president Florentino Perez, the man who swore blind that Real Madrid had no interest in David Beckham.

Del Bosque, in typically decent mode, has said that so long as Ranieri is in office, he has no ambition to replace him. Quite how after his many years with Real he would adapt to English football must be problematical. Nor can one see quite why Abramovich thinks it is worth allegedly dangling £4m a year in front of Eriksson, whose value seems to have waxed as the fortunes of his England team have so dismally waned.

By a massive irony, the very day that Abramovich got hold of Chelsea it was announced that Gianfranco Zola would be leaving, and for Serie B Cagliari, the club that never gave him the time of day during all those years in obscure Sardinian football, which lasted until he was 23 and joined Napoli.

Typically, Zola has been very polite about it all, admitting that he could have made a mistake. He has, and so have Chelsea, who made the player a humiliatingly reduced offer in light of his brilliant form last season, only to be hiked up when far too late. Zola said he would stand by his word to Cagliari, who would be paying him about a quarter of the final offer from Chelsea.

At his final press conference, the player tactfully said that he quite understood why Chelsea had originally made him such a small offer, given their financial position. In which case, you might ask, why did he not accept it? Penny wise, pound foolish indeed. And just the last of the snubs and disappointments that have strangely peppered the career of this fine player and endearing person. He'll be wasted in Cagliari and badly missed at the Bridge.

Inept UEFA lets Turks off the hook

UEFA, inconsistent and inept as ever, has disgracefully sold the pass in merely fining the Turkish federation £22,000 after the appalling behaviour not only of their fans but by their official tannoy announcer during the Euro 2004 qualifier against Macedonia at Besiktas' ground in June.

The English FA, by contrast, was fined £75,000 for offences which, however grave – pitch invasions at Sunderland, racist abuse – were nothing like as serious as the offences of the Turkish hooligans, whose bombardment of missiles knocked a Macedonian player unconscious. All this while they were being shamefully whipped up over the tannoy.

UEFA's Mike Lee bleats that the previous "good behaviour" of the Turks has mitigated their punishment, which, if it were not the award of the match to Macedonia, should at least have been decreeing that Turkey's home game against England in October be played behind closed doors or even in another country.

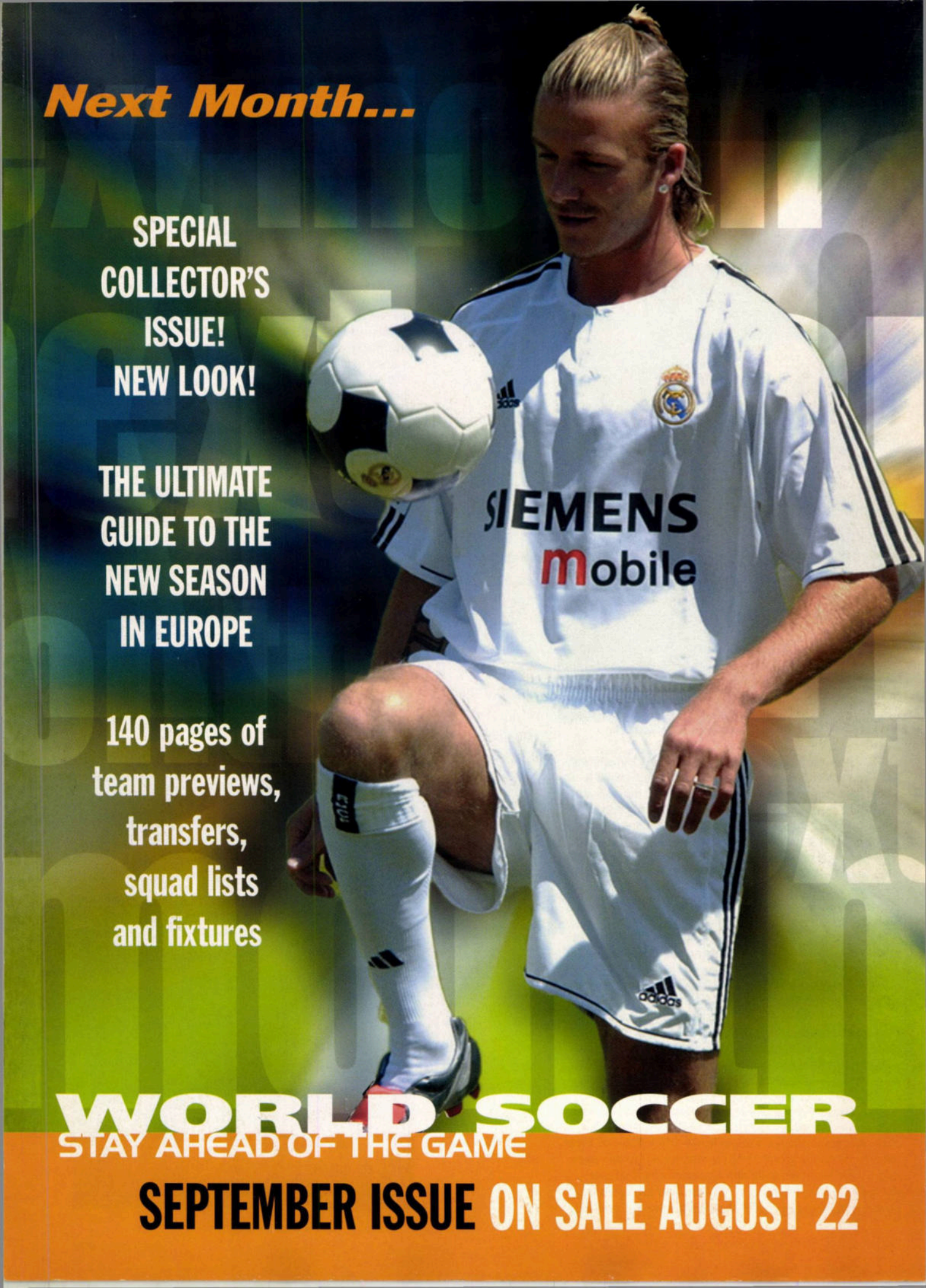
The decision of a Turkish court to hold a new trial of the brute who stabbed two middle-aged Leeds fans to death in Istanbul in April 2000 has displeasing resemblances to the UEFA decision.

UEFA talks weasel words about "provocation", the Macedonian players wrapping themselves in their country's flag. By the same token, the Turkish judge talks of Turkish louts being "provoked". But not remotely by the two poor men who died, who simply and innocently walked into the melee from an adjacent hostelry.

We know misguided England fans, defying the FA's ban, will make their way to Istanbul in October. Lord knows what will happen to them, but whatever it is we are sure to hear their assailants were "provoked".

'UEFA talks weasel words about "provocation" ...but the Turkish hooligans' bombardment of missiles knocked a Macedonian player unconscious'

Flashpoint...flares are ignited during the Turkey-Macedonia game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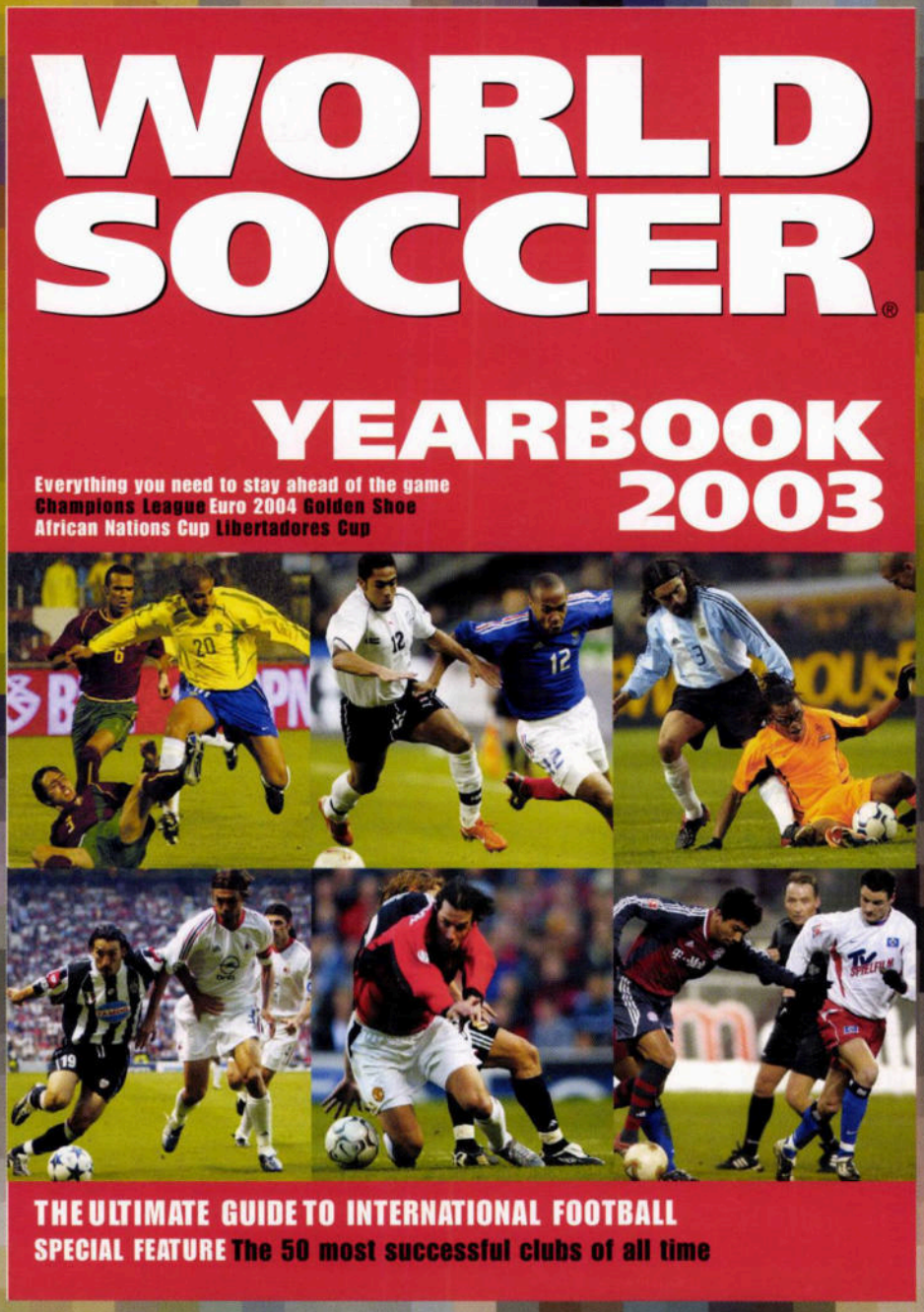

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